

Halo: The Citadel's Mistake

by EliteAssassin

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Summary: When a Forerunner fleet heads to the Sol System attempting to stop what they think may be an attack by an unknown race, they end up finding Citadel forces. The Citadel forces fire on the Forerunner fleet after the Forerunners fail to respond to communications. The Covenant have offered the Citadel help, as payback for the decades of oppression they took from the Forerunners.

1. Chapter 1

This story assumes the Shepard lives past the events of ME3 and that the Citadel forces rebuild to peak strength. Also that there are no tensions (at the beginning of the story) between the races of the ME universe. It also assumes that the Human-Forerunner war never happened, and that instead The two groups eliminated the flood (except for a few spores saved for experiments) and have now integrated their societies. They have one Council leading them, one Military, they are one Empire. The Forerunners did still perfect the Halo rings and the Composer weapons, and Promethean Knights can now be made from any sentient life instead of just Humans and Forerunners, or they can be assembled in factories. Mechanical assembly is slower, but then again they aren't at war. They only use the composer weapons if they desperately need troops. All ME relays are intact as is the second Normandy. The Covenant has been formed, but under different circumstances. Their technology is at almost the same level that they are in the game, if not, a little higher. They do not regard the Forerunners as Gods, nor humans as Heretics. If there are any other inconsistencies between this story, and the events of the Halo/Mass Effect Universe, please keep in mind that this is a Fan Fiction, and I am manipulating the elements of each Universe to go along with the story. It obviously will not go along perfectly with the canon story that you all so adore. I hope you enjoy it!_

The Didact was at the bridge of his newly upgraded personal Planet-Breaker, the Mantle's Approach. One of the consoles in the

bridge was flashing. "Sir, Master Builder Faber is attempting contact us.". One of Promethean warrior-servants called.

"Go ahead." The Didact sat down in his chair. From his chair he was looking through the glass on the bridge that allowed him to see the endless space in front of his ship. A semitransparent black screen appeared on the glass. It flickered, and then Master Builder Faber, in his mostly aesthetic armor appeared.

"Didact." Faber said. "How is your fleet doing? Any Trouble from the San 'Shyuum? "

The Didact suddenly stared angrily at the screen. "You know very well that there hasn't been any activity in this sector for over sixteen months. Just tell me what pointless expeditionary force you want me to escort this time and my fleet will be on its way"

Faber's head looked away for a moment. "Listen, we've intercepted a transmission from the Sol System going to an unexplored part of the Orion Arm of this Galaxy."

"Sol?" The Didact rose out of his seat "We haven't even had an exploration vessel there for over ten Millenia. The last time Humans were there was over three centuries ago when Forthencho was forced to Glass Mars because of a flood infestation."

"Which is why we are concerned," Faber said. "I will need you to take your fleet and head immediately to Erde-Tyrene. Whatever is transmitting these messages is currently on that planet. We're still trying to decode most of the message, but we've definetly found the word 'attack' and coordinates for the Epsilon Eridiani system."

The Didact signaled to the Prometheans working on his bridge, who had overheard the conversation, and they began sending the message to the rest of the fleet. "Do not worry Faber. You tell the Council I only need a few weeks, and this threat will be neutralized."

"Wait!" Faber yelled. "Didact please, we do not want war. We are sending your wife on this mission. If there is some intelligent species out there, we want to avoid a war. She will be in charge of negotiatiois. Do not instigate unecceary violence."

The Didact grunted. "Very well." The Black screen blinked away. The ship turned full to Port, as did all the other ships in the fleet of over 100 ships.

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><p>The Normandy was 30,000 kilometers away from the Charon relay. A massive fleet, composed of a Dozen Dreadnaughts, six Carriers, forty-five Cruisers, and over 100 frigates were preparing to jump to a new system discovered by Citadel forces. They were to be met by a Turian fleet and an Asari fleet, the latter responsible for for exploration of the new system and scientific research. Joker ran up to Shepard. "Earth's under attack!"

"What?" Shepard looked surprised, which hardly happened since the Reapers were defeated.

"Massive fleet, unknown origin, they just popped up right outside

Earth. Attempts at communication failed, the fleet defending Earth opened fire. The unknown fleet returned fire. Lots of it."

By the time Joker was done talking, the majority of the Alliance fleet had already engaged their FTL drives and were en route to Earth. A detachment from the Turian fleet also notified the Normandy that they were coming to help, as did a small Krogan fleet orbiting Jupiter.

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><p>The Didact's ship had just exited slipspace. He saw a Builder ship at the center of his fleet, which was moving in a Spiral formation. The Mantle's Approach moved to center right beside the Builder ship. One of the consoles beeped, and then Librarian's voice could be heard. "Didact, I need you to bring all weapons and shields offline, then scatter fleet, bring a few Picket cruisers. Leave the rest of the fleet here. This way we don't look like much of a threat."

The Didact hesitated, then nodded at the other Prometheans in the bridge, who then relayed the orders to the rest of the fleet. "If these insolent creatures are planning on attacking us, then why not just obliterate them?"

"That's the problem." The Librarian's voice sounded nervous, which surprised the Didact, as she was usually confident about everything. "We've only decoded a part of the transmission, we don't know if they were planning on an attack."

The Didact's helmet formed around his head. "If anything happensâ€|"

The Librarian cut him off. "Just let me do the talking. You can go caress your guns or check on your War Sphinxes." The Transmission ended.

The Didact's ship followed the Builder ship on its approach towards Erde-Tyrene, Earth. They were supported by a twelve small Picket cruisers. Each of which was armed with a few Hardlight Batteries and two Particle Canons. As the ships approached Earth, they saw a massive fleet waiting. Somewhere between 200 and 250 ships, all varying in size from a few hundred meters to a kilometer were zipping around Earth. The Forerunner ships had their shields lowered and their weapons offline. This made the Didact feel very uncomfortable. Suddenly, the window on the Bridge flashed red. "Sir, one of the ships is trying to hail us, but they're using electromagnetic frequencies. They won't be able to receive our messages, and it'll take me a while to configure the comms array to electromagnetic frequencies." The consoles were flooded with messages from the Builder ship and the Picket cruisers, all reporting the same problem. None of the ships changed course however. They remained on a track to Earth. Suddenly, the Picket Cruiser in front of the Builder ship was bombarded with rounds traveling extremely fast. Within a few seconds, the Ship was falling apart.

"Tell all ships to put their shields on!" The Didact yelled. "Bring our weapons online, focus fire on their largest ships!" The Builder ship was hit with dozens of the like slugs that tore the Picket cruiser apart. The bridge of the Builder Ship was on fire and the

engines were down. The Weapons were unresponsive and the Shields were just coming online.

"Sir, Particle cannons are online, Hardlight Batteries returning fire, and the Shields are at full power."

"Good," The Didact smiled. "Call the rest of the fleet. Let's show these weaklings some Forerunner firepower."

2. Chapter 2

Rtas 'Vadumee was at the bridge of the Covenant Supercarrier, _Shadow of Intent_. An Elite Zealot approached him. "Sir, scans show a increase in activity in the Sol System. One of our Expeditionary Battlegroups is currently in the Sol System. We should recall the ships before any hostiles find them." Rtas showed no expression. Years of unsuccessfully fighting off Forerunner raiders and Ancient Human Colonizers made him grim and emotionless, seeing his comrades fall in battle, their deaths practically in vain.

"No," Rtas said. "We will move two fleets to the Sol System. We must have a Colony there, so that Expeditionary force must stay, and they must live."

The Zealot looked surprised, his jaws open. He closed his mouth and walked off. Soon, the _Shadow of Intent_ and her supporting fleet were speeding through slipspace, in a few hours, they would be right outside Mars, ready to decimate any hostile fleet that got too close.

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><p>The Didact smiled as one of the larger enemy ships exploded in flames after being hit by several Particle Cannon shots. The ship suddenly rocked. "What was that?" The Didact asked.<p>

"Nothing sir," one of the Warrior-Servants said as his hands moved like a well-oiled machine over one of the console controls. "About thirty-eight kilotons, our shields can take a lot more than that."

The Picket Cruisers surrounded the Builder ship, providing it with cover fire as the _Mantle's Approach_ hammered away at the hostile fleet. The rest of the Forerunner fleet was fast approaching. Millions of weapon-ships were zooming towards Earth. Right as the weapon-ships zipped past the Didact's ship, the hostile fleet deployed thousands of fighters. The weapon-ships' armor was no match for that of the enemy fighters.

As the rest of the Forerunner fleet joined the Didact, another massive fleet of hostiles appeared, weapons ready, and opened fire.

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><p>The Normandy was speeding towards Earth, when suddenly her FTL drive failed. "The Hell?" Joker had no idea what was happening. Shepard and the rest of the crew were in the CIC. Edi also had no explanation for what was happening. A weird looking ship was in front

of the Normandy. It was about the same size as the Normandy, though a little bulkier, and was purple. Several fighters were being deployed from the ship. "They're attempting to communicate with us." Joker looked at Shepard.<p>

"Let's talk then." Shepard walked to the Communications room, most of the crew soon joined him. A hologram of a tall, muscular creature with multiple jaws popped up. He started speaking unintelligibly. Another similar looking creature, though slightly shorter, with less ornate armor, walked up and told him something.

"Humanâ€¦" The alien took a long pause. "I will give you a few moments to state your business before the plasma batteries on my ship turn you to dust." His voice was deep and seemed strained.

"Our business?" Shepard looked amused. "You're in Alliance territory. I'd like for you to clarify what you're doing here." As the conversation between the Alien and Shepard went on, the Normandy received several messages from the Alliance fleet defending Earth, many of which contained images of the attacking fleet.

"Our Corvettes will guide you down. Deactivate your weapons." The rest of the crew looked concerned as several more of the purple ships positioned themselves around the Normandy.

"What do we do?" Joker turned around.

"We have no idea what sort of weapons these guys are packing, and there's way too many of them, just follow their ships down." Shepard signaled for the rest of the crew to go down to the hanger bay.

Grunt walked alongside Shepard. "What are you doing Shepard? There's no time to stop and chat with these split jawed freaks, we should just bash through their ships and continue to Earth."

"And start another unwanted war?" Shepard stopped and looked at the Krogan. He placed his hands on the Krogan's shoulder. "Now calm your balls, a little patience is all we need." Shepard kept walking.

* * *

><p>Rtas 'Vadumee and Thel 'Vadamee stood in the bridge of the Supercarrier. Jul 'Mdama walked quickly towards them. "The Corvettes have captured a ship of unknown origin. They have identified some of the crew as closely resembling the Humans, but the rest are of various unknown species. The ship's captain is waiting to speak with you Thel."<p>

Thel grunted and began walking. "Have a phantom waiting in the hanger bay for me."

"Jul," Rtas said. "Accompany the Arbiter, take several Special Operations soldiers with you." Jul nodded and ran off after Thel.

The Phantom flew down towards the surface of the Mars, flanked on each side by two Banshees. The Phantom slowed to a stop in front of a massive Covenant Citadel. Jul and Thel jumped out of the Phantom. The SpecOps team followed. They walked down an extremely long corridor

that lead to a massive meeting room. Before the entered the room, the SpecOps elites activated their cloaks. Jul and Thel entered the room, the entire crew of the Normandy was already seated. Two Zealots guided Jul and Thel to their seats.

"Human," Thel looked right at Shepard. "My name is Thel 'Vadamee, my accomplice here is Jul 'Mdama."

"Shepard." Shepard said.

"How is it that you appear here, in the territory of my people." Thel said inquisitively. "And how is it that you are accompanied by these?"

"Lesser races." Jul interrupted.

Grunt stood up quickly but three Zealots pulled out their energy swords, which, although reluctantly, made him sit down.

"Look," Thel tapped the table. "I would prefer to avoid war with whatever faction you are loyal to. I understand that you claim to own this planet."

"We've had colonies here for a long time." Shepard said.

"We could always glass the planet, that would remove your settlements, free up some space for us." Jul smiled, or at least what could be considered a smile for an Elite.

Thel scratched the table out of anger. "Perhaps we can come to an agreement. Maybe we could provide some sort of aid to you, in return, you give us this world."

Three Elite Minors ran into the room. "Sir, scans have shown Forerunner activity about 54 kilometers away from us. What should we do?"

Thel stood up. "Prepare the fleet for an attack, notify all other fleets, get a battlegroup of Corvettes ready for me."

"Corvettes?" Jul looked puzzled. "You should at least take a Battlecruiser."

"Forerunners?" Liara asked.

"Terribly strong enemies." Thel signaled for two Zealots to prepare his phantom. "fighting them is suicide."

"You mean these?" Liara pulled out a Datapad and swiped to a picture of the Mantle's Approach.

Thel was speechless for a second. "Yes, how do you know about this?"

Shepard walked over to Thel. "Alliance fleets are under attack from these, Forerunners. We need to get to Earth as fast as we can to join the defense."

"The liche is here sir," an Elite Ranger said. "And the Assault Carrier Fervent Redemption has volunteered to head the battlegroup

to strike the Forerunners."

Thel signaled at Jul, who took the hidden squad of SpecOps Elites and escorted them back to the Normandy.

When Thel boarded the liche, Rtas hailed him. "What do you think you're doing? That Forerunner fleet is massive. You won't be able to do anything with one Assault Carrier and a few Battlecruisers and Corvettes!"

Thel spoke calmly. "Just keep this planet safe from anything that is hostile. I'll use the Corvettes to occupy the smaller Forerunner ships, The Battlecruisers will keep the Mantle's guns busy, the Assault Carrier will bring down the shields on that Builder ship so that I can board it. If we can hijack this ship, or even just salvage few of the weapons, this could change everything for us."

"You'll need a Supercarrier to get through those shields." Rtas said blatantly.

"Supercarriers aren't expendable things, we need as many as we can get."

"At this point, NOTHING is expendable!"

Thel sighed, and cut off the communications. "Hurry, we may lose our only chance at this. And contact that ship, what is it they call it? The Normandy? Tell them to follow us. Perhaps we can use them."

3. Chapter 3

Three CCS Class Battlecruisers surrounded the Assault Carrier (Fervent Redemption). Dozens of Corvettes moved into position behind them. Sitting in the bridge of the Assault Carrier was Thel 'Vadamee. "Tell all the ship's to prepare for a slipspace jump to Earth. Weapons and Shields at full capacity."

The Normandy SR-2 moved in beside the Assault Carrier. "This is the Normandy, just tell us where the weak spots on their ships are and we'll have them down in no time." Shepard said. The Normandy engaged her FTL drive, soon after the Covenant Battlegroup entered Slipspace.

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><p>The Didact was watching from the Bridge of his ship as the enemy fleet was being crushed by the Forerunner Armada. The weapon ships had weakened the enemy fighters and the Forerunner fighters destroyed what remained. "Sir," one of the Warrior-servants approached the Didact, handing him a Data chip. "We managed to scan their fleet and their database. Here are all the classifications for their ships, as well as the specs."<p>

The Didact took a moment to go through the data. "Good," he liked at the enemy fleet. "Target that dreadnought, full power." Within seconds, the Planet Breaker ship has reduced the dreadnought to rubble.

"Enemy cruisers, fast approaching!" a Promethean yelled. "They're on

a collision course!"

Right before the cruisers could collide with the Mantle's Approach, Particle Cannons tore them to pieces. "Sir," the sam Promethean called the Didact over. "Slipspace rupture detected a few dozen kilometers out." As soon as he said that, a small battle group of Covenant ships appeared. Along side them, what looked like one of the hostile frigates.

"Get two Prevention class vessels over there. Decimate that battlegroup." The Didact walked swiftly out of the bridge and down towards the hanger bay.

* * *

><p>"Arbiter," two ranger elites were standing in the Bridge of the Fervent Redemption. "The Alliance fleet is in disarray, they are no match for the Forerunners, and the Didact has set up two Prevention class ships to stop us from reaching the Builder ship."<p>

Thel showed no expression. "Tell the, _Normandy_ is it? Tell them to fall in behind the Battlecruisers." Get four of the Corvettes and hold off those Forerunner ships."

"Corvettes are no match for a Prevention class sir."

"We just need them to distract the Forerunner ships so we can get past them." The Arbiter fingered his Energy sword. "Get a Phantom gunship ready also, and send this message to the Normandy." Thel handed one of the Rangers a Datapad. Thel then turned to one of the Elite Minors on the bridge. "I'll need all the energy Projectors to be fired right at the Builder Ship's Hanger bay so that my Phantom can enter, once I'm inside, you must disengage and help the rest of the Battlegroup hold off the _Mantle's Approach."_

* * *

><p>"We'll need some serious firepower to get through those shields," Shepard was holding his Lancer rifle in one hand.<p>

"Have some of your largest ships bombard the Builder Ship," The Elite said. "They'll need to concentrate all their firepower on the Hanger bay, and even then, the shields will only drop for a few moments, so our window for this is very small." The image flickered and disappeared.

"So who's going with you?" Grunt already had a Cobra missile launcher in his hand.

"Garrus, Grunt, Wrex." Shepard looked as if he was making sure this team was good for this operation. "With me." The four walked down to the Hanger bay, where the Kodiak Drop ship was waiting.

* * *

><p>The Eight remaining dreadnoughts the Alliance had were now positioned to fire on the Builder ship. Dozens of Crusisers were moving in on the three Picket Cruisers defending the Builder Ship. Dozens of Wolf Packs of Frigates were screening the Picket Cruisers, though they did little damage. The Dreadnoughts fired, all guns aimed

at the Builder Ship's Hanger Bay. The shields wavered, but did not break. The Covenant Assault Carrier, along with the Battlecruisers supporting it, charged up their energy projecters. As they were firing on the Builder Ship, Harrier-class Forerunner ships were crushing the Alliance fleet from the back. "Shit," the captain of one of the cruisers said over the Comms. "We need more support at the back here, we're getting smashed." Right as he said that, eight Covenant Supercarriers, along with a compliment of forty Assault Carriers appeared behind the Alliance Fleet. The Harrier-class ships scattered as the Supercarriers' energy projecters ripped them apart.<p>

The Kodiak dropship and Thel's Phantom were flying in formation with several Seraphs. As they approached the Builder Ship, Covenant Energy Projectors and Plasma Batteries bombarded the ship. When the eight remaining Alliance Dreadnoughts fired another volley from their Mass Accelerators, the shield's finally fell. As the Phantom and Kodiak approached the hanger bay, squadrons of Forerunner weapon-ships swarmed in, and the Seraphs broke formation to fight the weapon-ships. Right as the two dropships entered the hanger, point defense guns on the Forerunner ships hit them, the entire back of the Phantom was torn to pieces, along with three Elite Rangers. The kinetic barriers provided the Kodiak dropship with some protection, but it still spiraled out of control, slamming into the wall of the huge Hanger bay, Killing the pilot.

****{[I understand the Forerunners are OP, however, this is a Fanfiction story, not canon material, so I will be adding things to balance out the odds. (No, I will not turn Citadel forces into some sort of Imperium of Man Shit.) Do not consider this nerfing of the Forerunner/buffing of the Citadel forces, I'm not changing the damage output of either side's weapons, or changing the amount of damage each side can take, I'm just adding a few more options for the Alliance, that way the Forerunner don't Roflstomp them everywhere with loltech. Please, no bitching about this, If you don't like what I'm doing, you don't have to read the story, though constructive criticism is always welcome.]}**
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4. Chapter 4

****Considering all the negative reviews for this story, I am thinking of canceling this story, and going with my ORIGINAL idea, The Galactic Empire from Star Wars vs the Forerunners. I understand why people are being angered/and or think this story is stupid because of how OP the Forerunners are, but keep in mind THIS IS FANFICTION, also, it takes place years after the events of ME3, so who knows what secret weapon the Citadel forces might be packing? Plus, with the Covenant on their side, they could probably combine their tech and make something pretty badass. Also, if you think negatively of this story and you have no constructive criticism, just insults, then why waste your time reviewing?***

The Arbiter pulled his self out of the wreckage. He picked up his Energy sword and a Type-51 Carbine. Five Elites were returning fire from attacking Sentinels. One Elite Officer helped the Arbiter up. "The phantom is destroyed, we have no way out of this ship."

"We need to get to the Bridge, that we can send for a Liche to pick

us up once our mission is done." The Arbiter stood up.

Grunt jumped on top of the wrecked phantom and began firing with his Cobra missile launcher, destroying all the Sentinels.

"HAHAHAHA!"

Shepard, Garrus, and Wrex met up with the Arbiter. "We'll head to the Bridge," Shepard said. "You go do what you need to at the FTL drive, then we should meet back at here for whatever evac you have planned for us."

"We'll need to contact one of the Supercarriers to see if they can send a liche or another Phantom." Thel said. "Here take this." Thel handed Shepard a Data chip. "Insert this into one of the consoles on the Bridge, the A.I will hack into the systems and give you all the schematics for the ship, then notify the Covenant fleet that we need an evac."

"The teleportation grid is online!" one of the Elites yelled.

"Quick." Thel said. "The grid will take you as close to the bridge as possible."

Garrus had an Avenger Assault rifle, while Wrex was using a Geth spitfire. Shepard lead his group through the Teleporter.

Thel and his Elite Rangers went through the other portal.

* * *

><p>Shepard picked himself up off the floor. He was surrounded by 4 Builder Security members. Each soldier had a boltshot pointing at his head. A few feet away, Garrus, Wrex, and Grunt were in the same position. Shepard disappeared, the Builders were baffled, then, one of them was knocked out cold by shepard. Another was victim to a salvo of shots from Shepard's Lancer. Grunt knocked one of the Builders aside, and smashed the heads of the other two going after Shepard. Garrus tackled one of the other Builders, and Wrex knocked the lsat two down and finished them with his Geth Spitfire. Two Aggressor Sentinels flew around the corner, and simultaneously fired at Wrex, knocking him down. Grunt unleashed a volley of missiles, which made short work of the Sentinels. Shepard heard footsteps down the corridor. "Hurry," he ran to the door. "Garrus, get us through, we need to get to the bridge before their reinforcements can arrive." The footsteps got closer and closer.<p>

"Got it!" The door flew open. "Let's move." Garrus entered the room.

Garrus shut the door behind them, and sealed it. "This must be the bridge." Shepard said. There were tons of Forerunner soldiers in the bridge. Along with one, who looked female. She didn't walk like the rest of the Forerunner, or the guards they had encountered just outside the bridge. Instead, she was floating about a foot off the floor. She was flanked on both sides by soldiers in less ornate armor than everyone else.

"Stand down." One of the soldiers said, pointing his rifle right at Shepard's head four more guards just like those they had previously

encountered were now there, though they also seemed to have rifles, instead of sidearms.

Shepard and Garrus raised their hand above their head, and so did Wrex, although quite reluctantly. Grunt paused for a moment. Then, instead of raising his hands above his head, a missile flew out of his gun and hit one of the Soldiers square in the and Garrus ducked to avoid fire from two of the guards and returned fire, which Killed the guards. Wrex spun around with his heavy weapon, Killing the other two. The last soldier fired a few shots at Garrus, who dropped in pain. Shepard opened fire, wounding,, but not Killing the soldier. The rest of the crew aboard the bridge had disappeared, leaving the bridge to avoid being slaughtered. Grunt and Shepard approached the woman, as Wrex tended to Garrus's wound. "We should Kill her" Grunt said.

"No," Shepard lowered his gun. "We could take her prisoner." Shepard inserted the Data chip into a console. He turned towards the floating woman. "What's your name, rank, and business attacking an Alliance fleet?"

* * *

><p>One of the Rangers was badly wounded. He had been hit in the left shoulder and the stomach by a lightrifle when his shields were down. "Arbiter! How can we make it to the slipspace drive? It's on the deck above us and the Forerunners probably have Dozens of Sentinels guarding it by now."<p>

"Stay faithful my brother," Thel emptied an entire magazine, Killing a Promethean warrior-servant. "We will do this." One of the other Rangers threw a Plasma grenade, which stuck onto the armor of a warrior-servant. The last warrior servant was killed by fire from the other Elites' plasma rifles. "To the lifts." The Arbiter lead his team of Elites into the blue colored gravity lift. It took them up to the deck above. As the group began running towards the Slipspace drive, A beam from a Super Sentinel Killed one of the Rangers. Thel yelled out of anger, and leaped into the air, his energy sword in hand. He grabbed onto the Super Sentinel and cut it in half. The wounded ranger had managed to open the door leading to the room housing the Slipspace drive. The other Rangers were holding off Builder Security. "We need to plant the Plasma charge, quickly." Thel dodged a beam of hardlight.

"What about the one called Shepard?" The wounded Elite limped over to the massive slipspace drive, planting plasma charges all over.

* * *

><p>The Mantle's Approach launched several Despair-class fighters to take care of Alliance fighters screening the Planet-Breaker. A Covenant Supercarrier was engaging the ship head on, all plasma batteries firing at the ship. At the same time, five CCS-class Battlecruisers were flying circles around a Fortress-class vessel attempting to come to the aid of the _Mantle's Approach._

"Damage assessment." The Didact sat down at the Bridge of the ship.

"Nothing noticeable sir," The Promethean was going over ship information. "The Sangheili ship is too far away to fire Plasma Torpedoes and her energy projectors, however, two more Supercarriers are moving to engage us. I fear their combined power might be able to bring our shields down."

"Get a keyship to hold off those Supercarriers." The Didact stared grimly through the bridge's window.

"Sir," The Promethean looked surprised. "Master-Builder Faber is recalling three-fourths of our fleet to quell multiple renegade human rebellions."

"Dammit."

"I can reroute a few thousand weapon-ships to keep the Supercarriers occupied." The Promethean was already directing weapon-ships to break off from combat with Alliance forces.

* * *

><p>A Turian dreadnought with around fifty Turian crusiers had just entered the battle, as more than three fourths of the Forerunner fleet entered slipspace. The Dreadnought immediately fired upon the Mantle's Approach. The cruisers all converged with Alliance cruisers, that attempted to plow through a line of Forerunner cruisers. As the Citadel forces opened fire, the Forerunner cruisers returned. Harrier class Forerunner ships closed in from behind, and the Citadel forces were being crushed. Two alliance cruisers smashed into a Forerunner cruiser, the explosion destroying all three ships. The remaining cruisers withdrew from battle, and went to support the Dreadnoughts, all of whic were locked in combat with the Mantle's Approach. A group of Krogan cruisers, supported by dozens of Alliance Frigates engaged two Forerunner Fast attack frigates. One Alliance frigate slammed into the bridge of a Forerunner Fast attack frigate, destroying both ships. The other Forerunner frigate disengaged from combat after destroying six Alliance frigates and a Krogan cruiser. Right then, there was massive explosion, and a slipspace portal tore the Forerunner Builder ship in half.

5. Chapter 5

Right as the Librarian was about to speak, another door to the bridge was blown open. A squad of Promethean warrior-servants stormed through. These soldiers, unlike the others, were in full combat armor. Grunt and Wrex opened fire while Shepard grabbed the Data chip. The Prometheans were unscathed from the fire of Wrex and Grunt, and opened fire with their own Hardlight weapons. Grunt knocked the down the door Garrus had previously sealed, and Wrex, Shepard, and Garrus followed.

"Shepard, are you there?" A deep voice came over Shepard's comms.

"Taking heavy fire," Shepard hid in a doorway. "There's no way we can back to the Hanger bay, I don't even know where it is."

"There should be a hardlight bridge nearby, you'll can't miss it. It's a bridge of blue light."

Shepard peeked out the doorway and hardlight zipped past his head.
"Yea I see it."

"Run towards it, We're going to try and hack into the teleportation grid to get you back to the hanger."

Shepard hesitated. He turned to the rest of his team. "On my signal, we run for the bridge." He waited a few seconds. "Go!" Shepard and the team ran towards the bridge, hardlight zipping past them. Right as soon as they reached the hardlight bridge a portal opened up.

* * *

><p>Shepard and the other three flew through the portal and landed on the floor of the Hanger bay. "Get up." The Arbiter helped Shepard up. "Do you have the Data chip?"<p>

"Yea." Shepard waved the chip.

"Keep it safe," Thel said. "Lose that and this whole mission is fruitless."

* * *

><p>"Hard to Starboard," Rtas 'Vadumee yelled. "Fire up all energy projecters, we need to bring those shield downs."<p>

"Sir," one of the Elites said. "We won't be able to take down those shields alone."

"Have two other Supercarriers move into position to attack."

The three Covenant Supercarriers fired their Energy projectors at the Builder ship, temporarily bringing the shields down. The Liche go inside the hanger, and picked up Thel, Shepard, and the rest. The _Normandy_ had found itself inbetween a Covenant Battlecruiser and three Corvettes fighting a four Forerunner Picket cruisers. Two Particle cannons fired rapidly at the Normandy, collapsing her Kinetic barriers. A Kodiak dropship flew out of the _Normandy_ at the last moment before the Normandy was hit by another Salvo of Particle cannon fire.

"Shit," Shepard said. They were all on the bridge of the _Shadow of Intent_. "We've lost the _Normandy_ and the Alliance fleet is being crushed. The Turians and Krogans aren't doing any better." A Forerunner Keyship rammed into a Covenant Battlecruiser, taking relatively no damage, but destroying the Battlecruiser.

"We can't continue this fight sir," One of the Elite Officers said. "At this rate, both our fleet and the Alliance fleet will be destroyed."

Rtas was unsure what to do. "We should provide cover for the Alliance fleet so they can retreat, then all our ships can make a jump back to high charity."

* * *

><p>The Alliance fleet was breaking off from engagements. As the

Alliance Dreadnoughts broke off from battle with the Mantle's Approach, the Mantle destroyed another Dreadnought with a barrage of Particle cannon fire. The Foretress-class Forerunner ship destroyed two Covenant CCS Battlecruisers. The Foretress class turned it's attention towards the _Shadow of Intent_. An Assault Carrier attempted to draw the Foretress Class's fire, but was destroyed by the _Mantle's Approach_. By this time the Alliance fleet had already left, and Covenant ships were beginning jumps to slipspace. The Shadow of Intent was beginning to jump to slipspace, when she was hit by barrages from the Mantle's Approach, the Foretress Class ship, and two Forerunner Dreadnoughts.

6. Chapter 6

"Sir, our Slipspace drive is damaged." Consoles were flashing with red lights and warnings as the Shadow of Intent was slammed by wave after wave of Particle cannon fire. "If we make a Slipspace jump now, I have no idea where we'll end up, or if we'll even survive the jump"

The bridge rocked as a Picket cruiser came in close and fired with hardlight batteries. The _Shadow of Intent_ launched four Plasma torpedoes, which vaporised the Picket cruiser. Rtas 'Vadumee was at the bridge with Shepard and Thel 'Vadumee. "Look, before we do anything, we need to pick up that dropship, they'll never make it through the enemy fighters."

Rtas turned to one of the Elite Officers. "Get two squadrons of Seraphs to escort that dropship to our hanger bay."

Another Particle cannon blast hit the _Shadow of Intent_. "Sir, we can't take another hit like that. Once our shields go down we're finished." The Elite minor was redirecting energy from the engines to the shields.

"We need to make the slipspace jump." Thel said. "The rest of our fleet is gone, we can't stay to fight anymore."

"A jump won't do anything," Rtas said. "They'll just track us and follow us."

"They won't have time to track you," Shepard said. "They'll probably want to occupy Earth, and they'll need their fleet to deploy troops in the ground to keep control of Earth."

"If we jump now I have no idea where we'll end up." Rtas said.

"I'd rather take that risk than stay and get obliterated by the Forerunner fleet." Thel said.

"Sir the dropship has reached the hanger bay and we lost a squad of Seraphs to Forerunner Despair-class fighters. If you want to jump, give the order down, because once our shields go down we won't be able to survive a slipspace jump."

Rtas hesitated for a moment. "Make the jump now."

* * *

><p>The Mantle's Approach fired her Particle cannons right as the Shadow of Intent went through the slipspace portal. "Follow them!" The Didact said.

"Sir, Master Builder Faber is requesting more of our fleet, plus there are escape pods from the Builder ship that need to be picked up and if we want to occupy this planet we'll need ships to stay and deploy troops on the ground." The Promethean said.

"Pick up the escape pods, and tell the ships that aren't responding to Faber's call to start deployment of ground troops." The Didact paused for a moment. "Track that Supercarrier, I need to know where it went."

* * *

><p>Jul 'Mdama was now aboard the Supercarrier Joyous Death. An Elite Officer approached him. "Sir, the Shadow of Intent has disappeared, and we have no contact with her. The Supercarrier _Jubilant Life_ was destroyed along with Prophet of Regret. As neither Thel 'Vadamee or Rtas 'Vadumee are accounted for, you are now the acting Fleet Admiral for the _Fleet of New Hope._"

Jul was silent for a few seconds. "Was the Shadow of Intent destroyed?"

"I can't say sir, all I know is that all attempts to communicate with her have failed."

"Send out Search-and-Rescue ships, Notify High charity of these events and request reinforcements to bolster our defenses here." Jul said.

Another Elite officer yelled out. "I've established a connection with the Citadel forces sir."

"Good," Jul said. "Notify them that we're setting up forward bases on Mars to help with the defense of this planet, knowing the Forerunners, they will likely start destroying the defenses of all other planets in this Solar System."

* * *

><p>Rtas 'Vadumee had assigned Shepard and the Normandy's crew their own rooms aboard the Shadow of Intent. Shepard was in a room with the rest of the crew of the _Normandy_. "What do we do now?" Miranda asked. "We're on a ship in the middle of unexplored space at war with a nearly invincible enemy. Not only that, but we're onboard the ship of species we've never seen before with technology far more advanced than our own and their cause is unknown to us."

"They've shown significant hospitality to us so far" said Tali.

"Yea," said Joker. "Not to mention they were more than eager to help us defend Earth from, what was it they call those guys? Forerunners?"

"Maybe they're just using us to get what they want." Liara

said.

"Exactly!" Grunt exclaimed. "You heard them on Mars, all they want is planets to colonize. Who's to say they won't attack us once they've dealt with these Forerunners?"

"If they can deal with them." Liara said. "We had more than two-hundred Alliance ships, plus a fleet of Turian cruisers led by a Turian Dreadnought and a Battlegroup of Krogan cruisers, and we barely managed to destroy five of their lighter cruisers. When one of their heavier ships could crack our Dreadnoughts in half with a few shots."

"Liara's right," Said Shepard. "Our kinetic barriers were nothing for their weapons, and our weapons could do nothing against their shields or armor unless we had an entire fleet fire on one of their ships. Yet one of these alien's ships could take multiple blows from a Forerunner ship and still be battleworthy, at least capable to disengage from battle and escape."

Just then the door opened and an Elite Zealot walked in. "Thel 'Vadumee requests the your presence in the Hanger bay. Immediately."

* * *

><p>The Alliance ground forces on Earth were no match for the Promethean warrior-servants. Within a day, Earth was completely controlled by the Forerunners. The Bridge of the Mantle was empty, except for the Didact and his wife, the Librarian. "My life workers scanned the DNA of the System Alliance soldiers. They're remarkably similar to those of the Humans that helped us defeat the Flood."<p>

"Is that so?" the Didact asked. "I care little for who they're similar to, they attacked us without cause, so they must pay the price."

"Without cause?" The Librarian looked surprised. "They attempted to communicate with us, and they fired AFTER their attempts at communication failed and our ships kept advancing in their space. You should've ordered the ships to hold position until we decode their transmissions."

The Didact was silent, realizing she was right. "I saw the Builder ship explode. Then a Slipspace rupture tore it apart." He turned towards the Librarian. How did that happen?"

"The, humans I'll call them, had boarded the ship along with a strike team of Sangheilis lead by Thel 'Vadamee." She said.

"Thel!" The Didact was angry now. "We should have destroyed the Sangheili centuries ago, and the rest of the races that comprise this, Covenant. Now, they are nothing but trouble for us. But that doesn't explain how they made it past Builder Security and your personal Promethean warrior-servants."

"The Sangheili hacked into the teleportation grid placing the Humans right outside the bridge and themselves near the Slipspace drive."

"The Bridge?" Now the Didact was surprised. "Why would the humans need to go to the bridge?"

"I believe they stole some information from the ship's consoles." the Librarian said.

"They bypassed the ship's A.I and you couldn't do anything to stop them?" The agitation was present in the Didact's voice.

"The Data chip looked like a San 'Shyuum construct, and we know they have technology that can temporarily neutralize A.I systems, so it was probably given to them by the Sangheili."

"Why didn't you stop them?" the Didact asked.

"They Killed the Builder security forces and you know very well that my armor isn't combated rated. Plus, since the Sangheili hacked into the teleportation grid, there weren't really any options for me but to wait for your Prometheans to get to the bridge, and by the time they got there, the Humans already had the information they needed."

The Didact tapped on a console and brought up communications options. "Bridge crew, report to the Bridge, now."

* * *

><p>David Anderson had reassumed his position on the Citadel Council after the defeat of the Reapers. Now, after the Forerunner attack on Earth, he has requested a meeting between all the races' ambassadors. "These enemies are immensely powerful, more so than even the Reapers. If we don't act now, they'll come for all of us."<p>

"Communication logs show that human ships fired on the unidentified ships first," Irissa, the Asari Ambassador said. "Why should we help you deal with one of your stupid mistakes?"

Esheel, the Salarian Ambassador, nodded in agreement. "We'd rather not start a Galactic war that would lead to the end of all our races."

"So you'll just leave humanity to die?" Anderson said.

The council was silent. Quentius, the Turian Ambassador, spoke up. "The only thing that matters now, is that this unidentified fleet clearly has hostile intentions now, and we must do anything we can to preserve this Galactic community we have here and all races belonging to it, no matter the price."

"How then do you propose to stop those ships?" asked Irissa. "You had two Alliance fleets, a Turian fleet, and a Krogan Battlegroup, yet only five of their lighter cruisers were damaged."

"We know you Asaris have been working on a second version of the Destiny Ascension" said Anderson. "If you'd share those plans with us, we could implement the new weapon systems and armor on our ships, making Citadel forces considerably stronger."

"That's what this is all about!" Irissa yelled. "You humans only

think for yourselves, you just want our technology."

"You act like no one here puts their own species before others."
Quentius said.

Just then, a hologram of a tall unknown figure appeared in the newly installed hologram projector. "I am Jul 'Mdama, Sangheili commander of the forces that aided your fleets in the defense of Earth. I come to you with a proposition, we will commit all of our forces to aid you in your war with the Forerunners, in return though, we wish for something from you.

7. Chapter 7

The _Shadow of Intent_ finally came out of Slipspace, after several hours of travel. "Status report." Said Rtas 'Vadumee.

Approximately sixty-four AU away from our pre-Slipspace location sir," An Elite Minor was checking all the Supercarrier's system. "We're in the Soell system, one possibly habitable planet and a moon. Our shields are severely damaged, most weapon systems are down aside from the Energy Projectors. The Slipspace drive is incapable of making another jump. Reporting casualties on decks thirty through thirty-eight."

"Soell system?" Rtas said. "Scan the system, check for any Forerunner forces."

"Sir?"

"One of the Great Wheels is located in this system." Rtas said. We need to make sure there aren't any Forerunner Garrisons here as well.

A few minutes passed, and then several blips appeared on the Supercarrier's radar. "Sir, two Forerunner picket cruisers detected. They're on an intercept course with us." The Elite Minor said.

"Reroute all energy from the engines to shields. Power up the Energy Projectors and move the ship into a defensive position." Rtas said. "Thel, go get the ones we saved into the hanger bay."

Thel 'Vadamee walked out of the bridge.

* * *

><p>Two Forerunner Picket Cruisers orbiting Installation 4 along side a Human research cruiser. When the Shadow of Intent entered the system, the two Picket Cruisers moved to intercept the ship, as they needed to know the business of all ships in the Soell system (because of the presence of a Halo Installation in the system). As the Picket cruisers got closer to the ship, they recognized it as a Covenant ship. They opened fire. Within a few shots, the Supercarrier's shields were brought down. Before the Picket cruisers could report the engagement back to the Halo Installation, three of the Energy Projectors fired up, destroying one of the Picket cruisers. The other Picket Cruiser slammed the Supercarrier with more Particle cannon fire.<p>

"Sir our shields aren't coming back online and the engines are heavily damaged." The Elite Minor was fumbling over the controls trying to keep the ship stable.

"Drop all power from the shields, full power to the Energy Projectors." Rtas said.

"Sir?" The crew on the bridge was hesitant. "Our hull can't take any more hits from those Particle Cannons sir, we need to get the shields back online."

"You heard me Minor!" Rtas yelled. "Drop the shields, full power to Energy Projectors. Now!"

The Energy Projectors were firing back up. The Picket Cruisers took evasive maneuvers, but was still hit by the Energy Projectors. First the Shields collapsed, then the hull of the Picket Cruiser was melted. The cruiser exploded, but not before returning fire with a few more blasts from its Particle Cannon.

"Sir," The Elite Minor said. "All systems critical, our engines and life support are failing, we've lost all power from the Shield Generators. We've lost an Energy Projector. Damage has been reported on all levels. We need to land the ship somewhere right now, otherwise we'll all be dead."

"Can we land on the planet?" Rtas asked.

"The only place suitable for landing is the Great Wheel sir."

Rtas looked troubled. "That's our only option?"

"Yes sir."

"Put her down there then." Rtas didn't look happy about landing his ship on a Forerunner Halo installation.

* * *

><p>As Shepard and the crew of the Normandy assembled in the Hanger bay, Elites were running back and forth, trying to secure ships and moving cargo and weapons. "What's going on Joker asked?"<p>

"Due to the changes in the position of the ship and the level of energy going to the weapon systems, I assume that the ship is currently preparing for an attack." Edi said. The Supercarrier rocked violently.

"Damn." Thel said. "It must be Forerunner ships."

The space outside the Hanger bay suddenly lit up with a blinding bluish-red light. When the light dissipated, the ship rocked violently once more and then the light returned. Rtas 'Vadumee contacted Thel. "Arbiter, we are landing the ship on the Great Wheel."

"What?" Thel yelled rather surprised. "We have no idea what secret weapons the Forerunner hide on the Halo installations. And how do you expect to land on the Halo? Surely it is heavily guarded by

Forerunner ships."

"Human ships are guarding it," Rtas said. "The Humans have no quarrel with us, so perhaps we can trick them into letting us land so we can repair our ship."

"The Forerunners will tell them not to." Thel said.

"After we're through, and once we've landed, they'll have to deploy troops on the ground because they can't risk major structural damage to the rings."

"So what do you want me to do with the _Normandy's_ crew?"

"When we get past the Humans, I want you to take a Liche down to the surface of Halo, gather as much information and technology as you can. Surely there must be something here we can use."

"Humans?" Shepard asked. "As in, the System Alliance?"

"No." Thel turned to face Shepard. "These Humans are far more advanced than you. They're farther along in their evolution than you are. How you two can exist at the same time baffles me."

* * *

><p>The Shadow of Intent was heavily damaged. Smoke was coming out of several places on it's hull. A Human Dreadnought approached the _Shadow of Intent_. "What is your business here?"

The _Shadow of Intent_ responded. "We need to land immediately for repairs. We were ambushed by a fleet of pirates." The Supercarrier started jamming transmissions leaving the Soell System.

"I have orders directly from Master-Builder Faber and Yprin Yprikushima not to let any ship on this Ring world."

"We have thousands of souls onboard this craft, including your own Humans. If we don't land for repairs now, the engines and Slipspace drive will explode, Killing everyone. Surely you can let us land just for repairs. We will leave as soon as they are done."

The Dreadnought attempted contact with the Forerunner ecumene, but it failed. "I'm sorry, I cannot let you through without an ok from the Master Builder. However, my workers will be more than happy to repair your ship."

After several minutes of waiting, the Supercarrier responded. "Thank you, we appreciate any help you can lend." Unbeknownst to the Humans, a cloaked Liche had left the Supercarrier and was heading towards Halo.

* * *

><p>Onboard the Liche were Liara, Miranda, Edi, Garrus, and Shepard along with two squads of Elite Ultras, Thel 'Vadamee and two Hunters. When the Liche touched down, everyone got out. "We should spread out," said Shepard. "and look for anything useful on this place."<p>

"The Hunters will remain behind with the ship. As should your robot." Thel said.

"Perhaps we should mix up a bit. "Suggested one of the Elites. "You should take a squad of Ultras." He looked at Shepard. "And of your crew should go with the Arbiter."

"Liara," Shepard said. "Go with Thel."

Liara nodded with some excitement, maybe it was because she would be able to talk with the nearly eight foot tall Sangheili about his people, culture, and history.

Shepard led his group off. They passed by several structures, searching every building carefully, but finding nothing. They found another structure. This one far bigger than the others they had encountered. Shepard approached the door to the building, but as soon as he did, a Sentinel drone attacked him. He returned fire with a Type-51 Carbine. Two more Sentinels came from behind and attacked the squad of Elites, who all took cover and began firing back. Within a few moments they were surrounded in dozens of sentinels. One of the Elites took out his energy sword. "Cover me while I cut that door down."

One of the other Elites handed him a drop shield. The Elite began work at cutting through the door, which was slow and hard as the door was extremely dense. The sentinels kept firing, but by now Garrus had learned their weak spots and was picking them off with a Beam rifle. The door fell down, and the Elite signaled for everyone to get in. When they got in, they found something they never expected.

8. Chapter 8

Several hours of negotiation had passed. "Look, you can either agree to our terms and accept our help, or watch all of your races be crushed by the might of the Forerunner Navy, Right now, allying with us is your only option." Jul was frustrated now, and didn't like wasting time with the Citadel council.

All the council members spoke among themselves for a few seconds. "We accept your offer," David Anderson said. "But, we'll need some serious firepower if we want to crack those Forerunner ships, and, as proven, our ships do little more than provide the Forerunner's with a good laugh and target practice. We'll need some of the technology that your ships fielding if you want us to be of any help."

One of Jul's advisors spoke quietly to him. "Sir, if we can't give them any technology if we plan on turning on them."

"Turning on them?" another advisor looked surprised. "Why would we turn on them? For resources? Screw the resources, we're dealing with an Interstellar war with the most powerful civilization ever. Any help we can get we should take. Even if it means disclosing classified technology."

"Enough," Jul said to them both. He then turned to the screen to face the council. "This is not a decision for me to make. I will contact the Supreme commander, Ripa 'Moramee. But be assured, your decision to ally with us is a wise one."

* * *

><p>The Mantle's Approach and two Forerunner dreadnoughts were in hyperspace. "I've notified the Ecumene sir, they're sending the Suppression fleet to engage the main contingent of Covenant forces at Sangheilios, and a smaller force to keep Mars from supplying reinforcements to the Covenant."<p>

"Prepare the Promethean knights for immediate teleportation to the surface of the Halo installation." The Didact said.

"Sir, I'm detecting hundreds of slipspace anomalies at our destination," The Promethean was looking over the consoles. "Covenant ships, hundreds of them, along with those System Alliance ships."

* * *

><p>Liara walked alongside Thel 'Vadamee. The terrain was very rocky, they had been walking for several hours, and encountered nothing. "So," Liara said. "Care to tell me anything about your civilization?"<p>

Thel looked down at Liara. She was more than two feet shorter than him. "We Sangheili have been at war with the Forerunner for four generations. It is a fruitless war. We've been losing almost every battle, barely managing to hold the Forerunners away from our capital city. We are the leaders of the Covenant, a collection of races who are also fighting the Forerunner. In recent years, the conflict has scaled down to only minor engagements between two cruisers. I fear that will all change now, with Rtas's decision to aid your forces, the Forerunner will undoubtedly send larger forces to attack us."

As he finished that sentence a column of fire erupted before him, knocking him down. Two Super sentinels had appeared. They fired their weapons again, this time hitting one of the Elite ultras. The Elite's shields collapsed, but his armor was intact. The other Elites opened fire with Plasma repeaters. The Arbiter tossed a Plasma rifle to Liara and then pulled out his own Storm rifle. The Arbiter turned around and saw a door concealed in brush. "Everyone, on me!" he said. The Elites moved in formation, covering the Arbiter as he attempted to unlock the door. The door opened and the Elites rushed in. Thel threw a plasma grenade at the last Super Sentinel and the sealed the door.

"Arbiter," one of the Elites called. "Look at this." Arbiter and two of the Elites walked over. "A site cartographer I think." The Elite stepped aside.

"From the looks of this," Thel was examining the cartographer. "I'd say we're only five miles away from Shepard." Thel took a closer look at the cartographer. "and he's... Shit." Thel turned to the rest of his team. "Someone try and contact Shepard, whatever he does, he needs to get out of there!" Just as he said this, two Human soldiers broke down the door. They started firing hardlight rounds at the Elites. One of the Ultra's took three hits to the torso, and fell to the floor dead. The rest of the Elites followed Liara and Thel further into the building, occasionally turning around and returning fire.

* * *

><p>The captain of the human cruiser repairing the Shadow of Intent was looking out the glass on the bridge. "We haven't had contact with those Picket cruisers in over six hours. It's not like Forerunner ships to just disappear. Scan the sector for any other unauthorized ships."

"Aye sir." said one of the soldiers.

Several minutes passed by then one of the soldiers ran up to the captain. "Sir, sentinels on the Halo report unauthorized sentients on the installation. Attempts at neutralizing them occurred in the beings returning fire."

"Shit," The captain thought for a second. "Notify the Forerunners, and deploy ground teams. Have all sentinels on high alert. We need to stop whomever is down there before something bad happens."

* * *

><p>The Shadow of Intent was nearly done with her repairs. The energy projectors and shields were back on. There were just a few breaches in the hull that needed to be fixed. "Shipmaster," one of the Elites said. "Detecting movement among the human ships. They're deploying troops to the great wheel."

"They must have found Thel and the others," Rtas said. "Are the moving into an attack position."

"No."

"Good," Rtas felt somewhat relieved. "That means they don't know exactly who they found, we can still catch them by surprise."

"Orders?"

"Disengage from the Human cruiser, fire all energy projectors, we need to destroy those ships before they can call for help."

The _Shadow of Intent_ broke away from the Human cruiser repairing it. As it did so, Plasma batteries slammed the hull of the Human ship. Before the ships could react, the Energy Projectors had already obliterated two. The last cruiser turned hard to port and started speeding away. "Slipspace anomaly sir," an Elite said. "They're attempting to jump."

"Hold nothing back, they cannot escape." Rtas yelled. Every gun the _Shadow of Intent_ had fired everything they had into the Human cruiser. The cruiser erupted into flames so bright it hurt to look at, but the fire quickly died away. "We need to deploy more ground troops. Notify Thel and Shepard of the Human soldiers."

* * *

><p>"Bio-weapons maybe?" Wrex said.<p>

"Or an experiment gone wrong." Miranda examined one of the tanks. Inside were little spores, some as small as her hand, others bigger

than her head.

"I agree with Miranda," Garrus said. "These things look like they were once normal, but know they're all deformed." Shepard looked at another tank. In it was something that faintly resembled an Elite, just like the ones with him now.

"Whatever it is," Shepard moved away from the tank. "We probably shouldn't mess with it."

"Why?" Grunt asked. "This is just what we came down here for, a weapon against the Forerunners. Something that can kill them!"

"We don't even know what these things are Grunt." Shepard fingered his weapon as if he expected trouble. Shepard was the only one on the team that stuck with an Alliance weapon, the lancer. Everyone else had grabbed something from the _Shadow of Intent_'s armory. "Let's keep moving, I have a bad feeling about this place."

Another door flew open, and three armored people walked through it. "Check your corners," said one of them. "Sentinels report disturbances in this area. Anyone you find here that doesn't have authorization, should be killed. Am I clear?"

The other two nodded, and they spread out. Shepard turned around to tell everyone to get low, but the Elites had disappeared. As the humans passed by, Grunt jumped up and slammed one into a wall. The other two quickly turned around and fired on Grunt. The hardlight rounds almost immediately collapsed his kinetic barriers, and burned right through his armor. Grunt yelled, and fired several shots from the storm rifle he had. The Human dodged and a few of the plasma bolts hit one of the tanks. "Shit," One of the Humans said. "Neutralize it!" One of the Humans pulled out his side arm and tackled Grunt. As he was about to shoot Grunt in the face, Wrex threw him against a wall and helped Grunt up. The two then fired at the last human, who's shields flared up. The first Human Grunt had tackled got up and stabbed Grunt in the neck with an energy knife. "Enemy vectors in Flood research and containment room. All Sentinels and patrols converge on our position."

Shepard got up and kicked the soldier. The soldier's armor was very dense. It was a silverish red tint. Shepard shot the soldier, but the shields protected him. The soldier jumped up and punched Shepard in the chest. Shepard flew to the floor and landed with a thud. Garrus and Miranda then opened fire. The combined fire of their Plasma rifles was able to drop the shields of the soldier, who then proceeded to hide behind one of the tanks. Six small sentinels flew through the door. The fired beams of energy that made the very dimly lit room suddenly very bright. The beams connected with Wrex, dropping his shields and burning large holes in his armor. Wrex fell to the floor. Grunt got up, and pulled out a plasma grenade. He yelled at the Human that stabbed him, and threw the grenade. The soldier scrambled away from the tanks as fast as possible, but it was too late. The grenade exploded, destroying the glass on one of the tanks and killing the soldier. Spores flooded out of the tank. All of the Elites uncloaked themselves. "Run!" one of them yelled. A sentinel fired it's beam weapon at that Elite, killing him. As the rest of the team ran, Grunt stayed behind with the fallen Wrex. More Human soldiers knocked down another door and stormed into the room. "Go!" Grunt yelled. "I'll buy you as much time as I can." Grunt

punched one of the Humans in the gut, and then threw him at a sentinel.

Before Shepard could protest, an Elite grabbed him and pulled him out of the room. Outside the room there was a quick bright flash in the sky. The Shadow of Intent was flying away from the explosion and closer to the ringworld. A sentinel came around and fired at Shepard, barely missing. It came in low enough, and an Elite jumped up, energy sword in hand, he sliced at the sentinel, cutting it in half. Two of the Elites took point, sprinting ahead of the rest of the group. A few minutes passed by, and they were in sight of the Liche. Two Phantoms had landed nearby, and Joker, Ashley and Edi were conversing with one of the Elite Zealots. A column of fire erupted, one of the Phantoms spiraled to the ground and then exploded. Two Super sentinels came in, supported by two squads of Human soldiers. The Elites and Ashley ran to cover and began firing on the Humans while Joker and Edi ran to the Liche to start it up. One of the Elite Ultra's turned to Shepard. "We should flank the Humans," he said. I will take a few Elites and go around far, you and your team will hit them from the side. We should be able to take them quickly. The Elite began to walk off, but turned around again. "You should take this," The Elite gave Shepard his carbine and the pulled out his Plasma repeater. "That weapon you have there is useless against Human armor and Sentinel shields."

Garrus pulled out his sniper rifle. One of the Elites volunteered to spot for Garrus. So the other Elite that stayed with Shepard moved out with the team. As Shepard, Miranda and the Elite from the side, they saw the Humans trading shots with Elites. Ashley threw a plasma grenade with stuck onto one of the Human's helmets. It exploded in a flash of bright blue light. Plasma rounds started firing from behind. Shepard looked over and saw the Elites firing at the Humans. Shepard's comms buzzed to life. "Shepard," it was Liara. "Are you still in that room?"

"Negative," Shepard said. "Grunt stayed back to fight off Hostiles, and Wrex has been wounded badly."

"That's not good." Liara said. She paused for a second. "Thel needs to know if any of those tanks you saw in their were compromised?"

"One." Shepard dodged a beam of hardlight.

The comm cut off. Shepard fired a few more Plasma bolts at a Human. The Elites moved in, energy swords in hand, they ripped through the Human squads, though one was killed by an energy knife. One of the Humans shot the Elite with Shepard in the head. Miranda kicked the weapon out of his hand. Shepard tackled the Human, who threw him off and was about to stab him when a beam of purple energy went through his head. He looked back and Garrus was standing there on a ridge. As he motioned for Garrus and the Elite to come down, two Despair-class fighters zipped over the ridge. There was a loud bang, and the ridge was blown to bits.

9. Chapter 9

Ripa 'Moramee was on board the Relentless Mercy. It had been years since the last major engagement between Forerunner and Covenant

forces. He was on the brink of a deal with the San 'Shyuum and Forerunner-Human rebels that would possibly give the Covenant the upper hand, but in a matter of hours, all that went down the drain as The Fleet of New Hope made an unauthorized attack on a Forerunner fleet to help an unknown civilization. Now, tensions were escalated, The Jirihanae Empire is moving in on the edge of Covenant territory and pushing for the Humans to join them and the Forerunners in attacks on Covenant worlds, the San 'Shyuum have cut off all deals with the Covenant, though there were still a few San 'Shyuum sympathizers smuggling weapons and Forerunner tech to the Covenant. The Rebels seemed to care little for how other factions perceived them and openly voiced their support for the Covenant attack on the Didact's fleet. With the death of the Prophet of Regret, the only San 'Shyuum that actually joined the Covenant, and the disappearance of the Arbiter, Ripa, the Supreme Commander, was now left alone to lead the Covenant. He looked out the observation deck to see thousands of Huragok moving around a fleet of Citadel ships. The largest was the _Destiny Ascension II_, _about a kilometer longer than a Covenant Supercarrier. Huragoks had refitted it with a Covenant slipspace drive, added Covenant shields to compliment it's kinetic barriers, and Covenant plasma cannons and Energy projectors, as they did with all the other ships. However, the Destiny was different as it got two Energy projectors, unlike the other ships which got one on the bow, and it also had Forerunner shielding tech, which was given to the Covenant by some black market San 'Shyuum.

Y'gar, the senior officer on the Corvette approached Ripa. We've located _The Shadow of Intent._ It is in the Soell system, fifty-five lightyears from Mars, where the Fleet that engaged the Forerunner are. It's most advisable that we move now in order to get to it before the Forerunner do."

"The Citadel fleet isn't large enough to engage with Forerunners, and there is no doubting that we will have to fight some Forerunners on this mission." Ripa watched as Huragoks moved ever so cautiously, testing the shields on the _Destiny Ascension II_.

"The Second Fleet of Homogenous Clarity is ready for deployment, and Jul 'Mdama has volunteered The Fleet of New Hope."

"Jul," Ripa sat down in the captain's chair. "Jul is a brash fool. I fear that allowing him to lead a fleet into battle will result in a loss. I know for a fact he would not hesitate to do something as foolish as engaging in direct combat with a Planet Breaker or Fortress class ship."

"This may be our only chance sir," Y'gar said. "All of our A.I constructs suggest immediate relocation of all available assets to the Shadow of Intent's position. They believe that if we can take the Halo installation they are near, we can turn the tide of this war."

Ripa relaxed in his chair and thought for a few seconds. "Have the Huragok work nonstop, we need as many ships as we can get, have all the Citadel ships we have now rendezvous with the Second Fleet of Homogenous Clarity and then jump to the Soell system., and tell Jul that he can move his fleet to the Soell system."

* * *

><p>The Didact was in his private quarters. He embraced the Librarian. "We have no choice but to launch an all out attack on the Covenant now."<p>

"Maybe," The Librarian pulled herself out of his arms. "If we stopped with the nonsensical hatred of the Sangheili and other races that follow them, we can rebuild ties with them and bring about a new era of peace. After all, we hold the Mantle of Responsibility."

The Didact stood up. "The Covenant know not what they're doing. They have intruded on Installation 4. They're trespassing could bring the parasite back to the Galaxy."

"Maybe if you hadn't fired on the System Alliance ships and halted your-" the voice of a Promethean cut her off.

"Didact, we're exiting slipspace now, we've spotted the Shadow of Intent, it appears to be engaging in ground operations on the Halo Installation."

The door to the Didact's room opened, and his armor formed around him. "Have the warrior-servants ready, prepare the Promethean Knights."

* * *

><p>Warning lights blinked all over the bridge of the Shadow of Intent. "Forerunner ship has just entered the system sir!" an Elite Minor yelled.

"Classification." said Rtas.

"Planet-Breaker."

Rtas growled lowly. "Full power to shields and engines."

"What about weapons sir?"

"Charge up Energy Projectors, once they get in weapon range, we can try dropping their shields, but there's no point in trying to outgun that ship, we'll be crushed." Rtas said.

Hundreds of Despair-class fighters launched from the Planet Breaker. They closed in fast. Thousands of Space Banshees and Hundreds of Seraphs moved to intercept them, but half of the Despair fighters broke off, and headed towards the Halo ring. A few hundred Seraphs pursued them.

* * *

><p>Space lit up with a bright blood red, purplish light. The beam slammed into the Mantle's Approach. The entire ship shook and the shields flared. "Damage report." Didact demanded.<p>

"More than six teratons sir," an Engineer said. "Five more shots like that and our shields will go down, though I doubt they have enough energy for that."

Bolts of orange light streaked across space and collided with the _Shadow of Intent_. "Deploy the transports, get ground teams on the

Halo now, and prepare the knights for teleportation should the worst happen." Didact turned to face the Promethean. "You will lead the warrior servants. Do not let anyone on that ring live."

10. Chapter 10

Grunt threw another human against a wall, and then speared him with his head. One of the sentinels blasted him in the torso. The spores and the floor scurried around. They were crawling all over Wrex. Grunt got up again, and punched one of the Sentinels that got too close. Then he ripped it in half. One of the humans tackled him to the floor, and shot him several times. The soldier got up "It's dead." he kicked Grunt's body just to make sure.

"Check all the tanks for any breaches." The squad leader said. Wrex's deformed body slammed into the squad leader. It slammed away at his body, denting the combat suit the human was wearing. Just as a Sentinel turned to shoot him, one of the humans Grunt had killed jumped on the sentinel and started punching it. His body was also deformed. The other squad of humans were fighting to get spores off of their bodies. The human that killed Grunt aimed his rifle at one of the spores and shot. He aimed at another and shot. Then he took aim at the deformed, ressurected Wrex. Before he could pull the trigger, Grunt's deformed body pulled him to floor, and crushed his helmet.

* * *

><p>Garrus tumbled down the ridge, unconscious. The Elite was dead, a heavy boulder pinning him to the floor, and pieces of his combat dress were melted. Two Seraphs followed closely behind the Despair-class fighter as it came around for another pass. Before it could fire another volley of hardlight blasts, a Banshee slammed into it from the side. The fighter spiraled out of control, and crashed near the Liche. Shepard looked up, and saw dozens of Phantoms and Spirits flying down towards them, complimented by hundreds of Banshees. A Forerunner dropship zoomed right over the Liche, and six warrior-servants dropped out. They began firing their light rifles. Ashley got shot in the shoulder. The rifle was so powerful, the shot made her spin around. An Elite jumped up from a rock, followed by Thel, Liara, and some more Elites. The Elite fired a Fuel rod cannon right into the torso of the warrior-servant. Shepard and Miranda fired their weapons at another warrior-servant and took him down. Two Elites began firing at a third warrior-servant, but he threw a grenade at them. The grenade bounced off the ground in front of them. In stopped moving in mid-air, and an orange sphere expanded around it, eveloping the two Elites. Their shields collapsed, as did the orange sphere, then it blew up. Both of the Elites disintegrated into orange mist. Another Elite took a shot to the head from a Light rifle. The Arbiter drew his Energy sword and stabbed a warrior-servant. Shepard threw a plasma grenade at another and Miranda sprayed her Plasma repeater at one more. Before the last two could fire again, two cloaked Zealots stabbed them from behind. One of the Zealots approached the Arbiter, as the other Elites got Plasma turrets ready and Shepard and Miranda tended to Ashley's wound. "What is Rtas doing?" Thel put his energy sword back on its holster. "We should be getting as far way from this ring as possible, not setting up for an all out military invasion."<p>

"A Forerunner ship has engaged the _Shadow of Intent_, Rtas wanted all troops on the ground, because he knew the Forerunners wouldn't fire on the ring, and that the _Shadow of Intent_ couldn't beat a Planet-Breaker on it's own." The Elite had his hand on his Plasma rifle, as if he expected more hostiles at any moment.

Thel was silent for a second. Mulling over the idea of Rtas 'Vadumee, one of his best friends, since childhood, dying, in a hopeless battle against an unbeatable opponent. "We shouldn't be here. The parasite, from Forerunner legends, it is here."

"The Parasite is real?" The Zealot looked shocked.

"We should set up a base of operations. Have all troops that aren't on the Supercarrier regroup at our position. We need to be prepared for all sorts of attacks.

* * *

><p>Jul's fleet was just about ready to jump to the Soell system. Then the worst happened. "Kaidon," one of the Elite's approached him. "Forerunner ships entering Mars orbit."<p>

"AAARGH!" Jul yelled. "All ships prepare for battle, stomp these Forerunner into the dust!"

"Sir?" The Elite looked at him puzzled. "There's a Fortress class ship and four Dreadnoughts. Plus dozens of Picket cruisers."

"All ships," Jul broadcasted a message over the comms. "Attack formation, drive these Forerunners away from our territory."

Jul was on the Supercarrier _Exuberant Death_. Four more Supercarriers flanked it, two on each side. Dozens of Assault Carriers were below them, and hundreds of Corvettes and Battlecruisers sped towards the Forerunner fleet. The Fortress ship opened fire. It's Particle cannon tearing through the Covenant Corvettes. One Corvette slammed into the Fortress class, barely even damaging the shields. Two Battlecruisers fired their energy projectors at the same time at the Fortress class, only to be decimated by one of the Dreadnoughts. The picket cruisers engaged the Corvettes, which were no match for the Picket cruisers. Ship after ship was destroyed. The Exuberant Death moved into a position to fire her Energy projectors. The other Supercarriers followed suit. They all took aim at a Forerunner Dreadnought. The red-violet beams flew through space. A Picket Cruiser was unfortunate enough to get caught in one, and exploded. The beams connected with a Dreadnought. It's shields flared and weakened. Three Battlecruisers approached the Dreadnought as it's shields dropped and unleashed a salvo of Plasma Torpedoes. The explosions were massive, the Dreadnought tilted towards Mars as her engines failed. The Battlecruisers continued the bombardment with their Plasma batteries. The bridge of the Dreadnought exploded and flew off into deep space. As the Battlecruisers broke off to engage the Picket Cruisers, another Dreadnought flew over them. It spammed it's hardlight batteries which quickly compromised the shields on the Covenant ships, destroying them all. Two Covenant Destroyers fired their Energy Projectors from above the Dreadnought.

"New approach vector," The captain of a Forerunner picket cruiser

said. "Turn the ship twenty degrees up, hard to port, engines at half power. Fire all hardlight batteries and the Particle cannons." The Picket Cruiser engaged the Destroyers. One Destroyer quickly fell, but the other took evasive maneuvers and engaged the Picket cruiser. Although far smaller than a Destroyer, the Picket cruiser was giving the Destroyer hell. The Destroyer rocked as the Dreadnought right below it was destroyed by Energy Projectors.

Jul smiled as another Dreadnought was destroyed. "Move us closer to that Fortress class ship." As the five Supercarriers moved towards the Fortress class ship, Energy Projectors ready, four Foreunner Cruisers exited slipspace.

* * *

><p>A warrior-servant shoot two Elites in the head. A human then threw a grenade, killing a squad of Unggoy. Another Elite stabbed the warrior-servant but was quickly killed by the human. Two sentinels zoomed overhead. Thel and two zealots were holding off with a few Ultras by the Liche while Shepard and another Elite carried Garrus. A squad of Elite rangers began running back to the Liche, only to be killed by a Despair fighter that flew overhead. Two Hunters dropped out of a Phantom, along with several skirmishers, right before the Despair fighter came around again and destroyed the phantom. The Hunters fired at warrior-servants attempting to push closer to the Liche. Three Enforcer sentinels zoomed right over the Liche, completely ignoring the Covenant forces. Three squads of warrior-servants and a squad of humans also broke off and followed the Sentinels. "What's going on?" Liara asked.<p>

Thel ducked as a beam of hardlight zoomed over his head. "Either they've found a larger group of Covenant soldiers, or," he paused, and knelt behind cover, staring at the floor blankly. "I just hope they found a larger Covenant force.

A squad of warrior-servants began moving up, as the Ultras fell back. At the last moment, a wraith mortar hit the squad, killing four of the warrior servant, and throwing the other two aside. A Wraith moved out from behind the trees, and two Phantom gunships came down. They suppressed the humans and warrior-servants while Thel and the Elites regrouped. Thel walked up to Shepard, who was standing next to Garrus, along with Ashley, Miranda, and an Elite minor. The minor turned to face the group. "It is unlikely that he will survive, and if he does, there's no way he'll be ready for another fight. He's suffered extreme burns on his torso, all of his ribs are broken. There are possible fractures in his skull and legs..."

The minor was cut off by an explosion. Two ghosts were destroyed by a War sphinx. The machine turned to face Thel. It raised it's arm to fire its cannon, when a Banshee slammed into it. The ranger pilot ejected, and landed on the back of the machine. He took out a grenade, and was about to stick it to the cockpit of the War sphinx, when a hardlight bolt knocked him off. Two Zealots fired Fuel rods at the War Sphinx while the Hunters fired at it from behind. The War Sphinx snapped around. It's tail slammed into a Zealot, sending him flying into a cliff. It faced Thel again, and shot. Thel rolled, and then fired at it with his Carbine. The shots did nothing, and the War Sphinx charged its gun again. Before it could fire again, a beam of concentrated Plasma burned right through the cockpit. The War Sphinx collapsed to the floor. A Locust crawled around the cliffside. Two

revenants followed it. Shepard and Miranda joined the Arbiter at his side. Five spiraling balls of energy slammed into the side of the locust. They exploded violently, collapsing the shields of the locust. Four more balls bounced out from the explosion, and fell back towards the Locust, completely obliterating it. The Revenants turned to face where the balls had come from. A warrior-servant, at least a foot taller than the others jumped down. The Revenants fired their mortars. Dust flew up. The warrior-servant walked from the smoke unscathed. He aimed his Incineration cannon at the Revenants. He fired, and it destroyed both of them in a fiery ball, and the pilots disintegrated.

"Promethean," Thel whispered.

The Elites began running away from the Promethean instead of firing at him. Shepard and Miranda fired at him, but he shrugged off the plasma bolts and drew his Scattershot rifle. The rifle assembled itself in his hand. A Zealot rushed him with an energy sword, but he fired the Scattershot. The Elite flew back as his body disintegrated. The Huragoks began firing at him, but to no affect. Thel threw a plasma grenade at him, and rolled out of the way of his Scattershot. The skirmishers ran circles around him firing their plasma pistols at him. With a few strides, tackled one. He stabbed it in the neck, and rolled over shooting the other two. An Elite Ultra ran at him with an energy sword. He smacked it out of the Ultra's hand, and kicked the Ultra, killing it. Another Zealot fired a fuel rod cannon at his face, but he just shot the Zealot with his scatter shot. He took aim at Shepard, and right as he pulled the trigger a mettalic thing, about the size of Shepard's fist slammed into his shoulder. It exploded. There was a huge gap in his armor, and knelt down on the floor. Blood rushed out of his arm. He turned to wear the armor cracking unit came from. Around fifty flood forms of humans and warrior-servants were rushing over the cliff. Among them were Wrex and Grunt. The two barreled down the cliff, full speed at the Promethean. Elites and Unggoy opened fire, but there were two many. The flood forms jumped on the Covenant soldiers, beating them to death. Wrex slammed an Elite Ultra out of the way, and slammed into the Promethean. The Promethean threw him off and fired a boltshot at him. Grunt smacked the Promethean aside and started beating in him, when an Energy sword sliced through his back. The Arbiter leaped over the Promethean and shot another flood form with his Plasma rifle. When an Elite Flood form jumped at the Arbiter, the Promethean threw his self upon it, and shot it several times. They both nodded at each other, understanding what an outbreak of the flood meant, and continued to fight side by side.

* * *

><p>The Monitor 343 Guilty Spark floated around a large room. Sentinels were quickly flying back and forth. Teams of Aggressor Sentinels zipped out into the open and flew off. "Calamity, terrible calamity." Guilty Spark said. "Who would have done such a thing as to release the flood specimen?" Guilty Spark zipped through corridors and passageways until he came to a massive screen. Several camera views were displayed on the screen. The videos played in reverse, until Guilty Spark noticed Several bodies enter the Flood Containment room. "Expand that image" Guilty spark said. The image took up the whole screen and the video continued playing. The beings, two of them looked human, though the other three were unknown to him. Two were tall and burly, somewhat resembling the crabs found on Erda-Tyrene.

The other was even taller and spiny, though quite muscular. They examined the tanks containing flood samples. After what appeared to be a conversation, three of the humans (Which Fortencho stationed on Installation 4 to protect it in the case of a Forerunner absence) entered the room, rifles ready too fire. a firefight broke out as one of the large, burly aliens tackled a human. The fight drew out as the human team fired at the intruders. At the end of the video, Sentinels had entered, several of the tanks were compromised, and Elites had revealed themselves and escorted the intruders out. The two burly aliens stayed behind fighting. One was severely injured. The other put up a god fight, killing a human and destroying a sentinel, but was soon gunned down. The Sentinels immediately began neutralizing the Flood specimen, when the injured alien slammed one to the floor, and threw one into another. He picked up a human, and slammed him to the floor, then beat him him the butt of a Plasma repeater. The feed was cut off as a Flood spore jumped onto the camera. "Those untrustworthy humans!" Guilty Spark flew through another series of passageways. "I specifically commanded the Commander not to send Cadet squads to respond to emergencies, only the soldiers with at least Class twelve Combat Suits. Now look at what happened!" He was flanked by several Aggressor Sentinels. "I must reach the Didact and inform him of the developments on the ring. It must be fired."<p>

* * *

><p>The lateral lines of the Supercarrier glowed and Plasma torpedoes and Energy projectors arced through space, colliding with the Planet breaker. "It is a good thing the San 'Shyuum support us." Said Rtas. "Otherwise our ships would not even stand against a Despair class fighter." Two Particle cannon blasts slammed into the side of the ship.<p>

The bridge rocked and one of the Elites yelled out. "Shipmaster, shields are down by fifty percent, we must disengage from combat and retreat to a safe range. More plasma torpedoes were launched at the Planet Breaker, and even though the power they carried was equal to several gigatons, nothing happened to the Forerunner shields.

"There is no outrunning that ship, Forerunners have far better propulsion system than us." Rtas tightly gripped the arm rests on his chair. "Launch everything we have at them."

"All laser turrets and plasma batteries online, Energy projectors firing up and Plasma torpedoes ready to fire. But we're not in effective range for our Plasma batteries sir."

"Never mind, fire all weapons." Rtas said. The Supercarrier light up as dozens of Plasma torpedoes shot out from it, Lasers flew at the Forerunner ship while the Plasma batteries uneashed with everything they had.

11. Chapter 11

_**This chapter I know for sure will piss off people, making them think the Forerunners just got extra-retarded. However, I am thinking of making a smaller side story to go along with this story to explain why the Forerunners didn't spam Cruisers and destroy everything. This however, is entirely dependent on you guys, if you'd like this, just post a review saying so, or PM me. If you can overlook the apparent

stupidity in the chapter that's fine, but if you'd still like an explanation without the story, I'd be more than happy to PM you one. Also, please disregard anything in this story referring to the Mantle's Approach as a Planet Breaker. Though the Didact did have a Planet Breaker, the Mantle's Approach is not one.**_

* * *

><p>I probably should've put this in the beginning of the story, I apologize for this: _

_**In this story, the Covenant are somewhat stronger than they are in canon Halo series. Also, they are supported by the San 'Shyuum (There are no Jirihanae or San 'Shyuum in the Covenant except for a few prophets). In canon, the Humans and San 'Shyuum together were able to fight the Forerunners**__**(Even if they lost). This being said, the Covenant being bolstered with the tech that the San 'Shyuum sympathizers give them are able to take on the Forerunners. Obviously they cannot win in single ship combat, but with a large enough fleet, they could probably do some good damage to a Forerunner fleet.**_

The Mantle's Approach rocked as each Plasma torpedo slammed into it's shield, giving off enough energy to glass a small sea. "The Didact got up from his chair. The Librarian stood beside him, looking through the glass on the bridge worriedly at the Halo ring. A beeping noise sounded and the Didact raised his hand. A small hologram was projected in front of him. It was the monitor of Installation 04, 343 Guilty Spark. "This best be important." He said.

"The Flood have been released," Guilty Spark said nervously. "Calamity! I must fire the ring to prevent the specimen from spreading."

The Didact exchanged a quick glance with the Librarian. "No. Do not fire the rings yet, I will send the Warrior-Knights." Guilty Spark protested, but the Didact closed the hologram. He turned to one of the Engineers on the ship. "Get those Warrior-Knights on the ground now, and recall all biological units." The ship rocked again as more Plasma Torpedoes hit it, and then space outside lit up as the glass polarized when the Particle cannons fired.

"Sir, Faber and Fortencho are both attempting communication." a Warrior-Servant said.

"Put them both through." The Didact said, as a chair formed next to his for his wife to sit in.

Fortencho appeared on the left of the hologram, flanked by several of his guards. On the right, there was an explosion, and the interior of a builder ship was breached, only to have the hole sealed up by hardlight. Faber came into view, Builder security running frantically around the bridge. The first to speak was Faber. "Didact, we need your Prometheans!" More explosions rocked the builder ship. "Those terrorists have fooled the Jirihanae and San 'Shyuum into an attack on our worlds, and they're attacking us with stolen ships."

The Didact turned to one of the warrior-servants. "Notify a portion of our reinforcing feet to break off and head to assist the Builders with defense of Core worlds.

The warrior-servant bowed and turned to a communication console. Before Faber could say anything else, the hologram cut off. Fortencho's hologram now took over the whole space. "Didact, I would have gone to Faber for help, but unfortunately he is dealing with problems of his own."

"Be quick about what you need." The Didact said.

"I'm going to need help," The Hologram shifted, showing outside of an observation deck. Two fleets were clashing outside Charum Hakkor. One fleet was made up of over a hundred ships. All Human design. The other fleet had hundreds of ships, varying from Human and Forerunner design, to Jirlhanae and San 'Shyuum. The hologram then came back to look at Fortencho. "The Jirlhanae refuse to send any aid whatsoever, and the San 'Shyuum don't want to get involved as well. Our only other option is the Forerunners, and if you can't help us, I have orders from Yprin to withdraw all ships from joint Forerunner-HUman stations to defend Charum Hakkor."

The Didact was about to send a small battlegroup from the fleet sent to intercept Jul' Mdama's fleet to aid Fortencho when a warrior-servant called his name. "Didact, reinforcing fleet has arrived, one Fortress class vessel, three Dreadnoughts, and ten picket cruisers." Beams of Hardlight connected with the _Shadow of Intent_, bringing it's shields down. The Particle cannons on the _Mantle's Approach_ fired. Before they could hit, a purple sphere-like thing appeared. Out of it came a Covenant Battlecruiser, which took the hits for the _Shadow of Intent_, and was subsequently destroyed. Hundreds of Covenant ships then appeared out of Slipspace. Several Supercarriers were flying towards the Mantle's Approach in an attack vector, their lateral lines already charged up. They fired at the Fortress-class vessel. Although their Energy Projectors looked far stronger than other Supercarriers the Didact encountered, they weren't enough to bring down the shields on the Fortress-class. The Picket cruisers speed head-on into the Covenant fleet, while the Dreadnoughts approached from the left and the Fortress-class from the left. What looked to be about fourteen Battlecruisers and an Assault carrier turned to face one of the Dreadnoughts. They unleashed a salvo of Plasma torpedoes and their Energy Projectors produced a blinding light. After about fifteen seconds of sustained fire, the shields on the Dreadnought finally dropped, but before the Covenant could follow up with another attack, the Dreadnoughts unleashed a salvo of Particle Cannon blasts, tearing away at the shields on the Battlecruisers, destroying ten of them, and leaving the Assault Carrier badly damaged. Hundreds of pods were seen ejecting from the Assault carrier as she sped towards the weakened Dreadnought. The remaining four Battlecruisers moved in close, spamming Plasma Torpedoes. The Assault Carrier slammed into the bridge of the Dreadnought, preoccupied with returning fire at the Battlecruisers. There was a brief and bright explosion, but the Dreadnought was still there, albeit damaged. The bow of the Dreadnought slammed into a Battlecruiser that got too close, slicing it in half. The other three Battlecruisers fired Energy projectors. The Dreadnought stood, returning fire, when several Plasma Torpedoes from a Supercarrier hit it. Thousands of fighters, dropships, and Falco-class escape pods flew out into empty space. The dropships zooming towards Installation 04, and the Fighters moving to intercept Covenant Seraphs.

The Didact turned back to the hologram of Fortencho. "I'm sorry, but

I cannot lend any aid, the problems here outweigh any other that has presented itself at this moment."

The Librarian was about to say something, but the Didact cut off the transmission. The Didact then turned to the warrior-servant at the communications console. "Alert the Emergency Circumstance fleet, tell them there is a flood outbreak at Installation and we need the fleet immediately. Also inform the intercept fleet that Jul 'Mdama's fleet cannot be allowed to escape no matter what."

The warrior-servant nodded and set about sending the messages. The Didact looked back out the glass, to see several more Energy Projectors hit the damaged Dreadnought, causing it to ignite into a short-lived fireball.

* * *

><p>Miranda, Liara, and Shepard followed closely behind the Arbiter and several Zealots. A few Jackals stopped running, and turned to fire on the flood, in an attempt to slow their approach. Several Revenants came into view. The Arbiter jumped into the driver's seat of one, and motioned for the three to get into the passenger seat of the other Revenants. Each of the Zealots got into the drivers' seats. Several Unggoy stood heroically with two Elite Minors, but as soon as the Flood came into view, several of them scattered in panic, the Minors trying to restore order. The Revenants zoomed away, Thel leading the group. Shepard sat uncomfortably in the passenger seat with Thel. The seat was clearly not designed with human passengers in mind. The ride was smooth, unlike a ride would be on the terrain if he had a wheeled vehicle. "Where are we headed?" Shepard asked.<p>

"I've highlighted a rendezvous point about two kilometers from here. Hopefully whatever troops we have left assemble there, and we can try and hold out, perhaps warn the Shadow of the Flood breakout." Thel was very focused on his driving, every now and then stealing glances at the sides, checking for Flood signatures.

Shepard looked around, not sure what to do, or think of the situation. His eyes turned up, to see the Shadow of Intent hammered by the same Forerunner ship that lead the Assault on Earth. Then, a smaller Covenant ship came out of a Purplish hole in space, and sacrificed itself for the Supercarrier. It was followed by hundreds more, varying in size. He was awestruck. The beams of energy arcing through space, the firepower was clearly far more than anything the Citadel could ever hope to output. There was a deafening explosion, and the Revenant flipped forward, the momentum threw Shepard out of the Revenant, but Thel held on a little longer, eventually letting go before the thing slammed onto its top, the Plasma Mortar bending. Thel rolled on the floor, and picked himself up, and then drew his Carbine. Shepard groggily rose to his feet and steadied his Plasma repeater. When his vision cleared, he saw something similar to the drones he encountered in the containment room. It had two, arm-like appendages and grapple fixtures on each one. It hovered several meters of the floor and underneath it, carried a beam emitting weapon. This one however was larger than the others. There were two more surrounding it. One fired, and the Arbiter jumped out of the way. The beam kicked up dust, causing Shepard to shield his eyes. He opened fire on one. Its shields flared in all the spots where a plasma bolt connected. Thel threw a sticky grenade into the air and shot it

while it was right next to the lead Sentinel. The grenade exploded, collapsing the Sentinel's shields, and Shepard opened fire on that one. Thel tackled Shepard to the floor before the other Sentinel could fire at him. The two Sentinels fired at Thel, knocking him back and taking out his shields. Before he could get back up, a Plasma Mortar blast slammed into one, sending it to the floor in a molten heap of Metal, the other with its shields now compromised turned to face the new threat, when another Plasma Mortar blast hit it. The two Revenants slowed to a stop, and one of the Elites got out to help Thel flip his damaged Revenant. Shepard walked over. "Are you sure you want to keep using this thing? It looks pretty beat up."

"Would you rather walk?" Thel jumped in and after fidgeting with the controls a bit, and a few kicks, the Revenant rose a few inches and the engine thrummed to life. "Just keep heading that way," Thel pointed forward. "The rendezvous is still about a mile out."

Shepard looked around, the other two Revenant began speeding off again. He jumped in without hesitation, though still uncomfortable with the seats.

12. Chapter 12

The cruisers split into groups of two. They went around the sides of the Covenant fleet, battering it with laser fire. Corvettes zipped around trying to avoid being hit and return fire at the same time. Two Supercarriers turned to face a carrier. Dozens of Plasma Torpedoes were launched. The Cruisers shield's shrugged them off and hit back with laser fire. A CPV-class Heavy Destroyer flanked by two RPV-class light destroyers moved in on one of the Cruisers. Several Battlecruisers flew around the Forerunner cruiser, drawing it's fire. Seraphs zipped back and forth dogfighting with Despairs. The Destroyers fired their Energy Projectors, along with all their Plasma Torpedoes. Jul sat in the Captain's chair. He looked down at the console and saw a 3D image of the battle. He saw Corvettes skirmishing with Picket cruisers and Battlecruisers trying to hold off a Dreadnought, with little success. The Energy Projectors fired. The beams connected with the Fortress-class for a solid minute. The Fortress-class ship turned to the left and fired at one of the Supercarriers. The beams of energy flew too fast for evasive actions. The Supercarrier was destroyed. "New Heading," Jul zoomed in on one of the Dreadnoughts circling around his fleet, then a Superdestroyer at full thrust towards the Fortress-class. "Two, zero, nine. Engage that Dreadnought, have the Superdestroyer move back to assist us." The Supercarrier turned sharply and fired at the Dreadnought, which just destroyed two Battlecruisers. A Heavy Destroyer moved close to it firing Plasma Torpedoes while the Frigate Unflinching Resolve engaged along with two other Reverance-class cruisers. The Dreadnought fired at the Cruisers, destroying one. The Exuberant Death fired several Plasma Torpedoes just as the Superdestroyer fired the majority of her Energy Projectors. Two more Frigates began bombarding the Dreadnought with Plasma Torpedoes. The Heavy Destroyer also began firing it's Energy Projector. The remaining Reverance-class cruiser began to fire its Energy Projector but was blasted to bits by the Dreadnought. Plasma torpedoes were launched out from the Supercarrier, while it grazed over the Dreadnought with its Energy Projectors. Several Corvettes flew around the Dreadnought drawing it's fire. The Superdestroyer came around the back of the Dreadnought, and fired again, this time hitting the engines. It died,

then there was a huge explosion which caught a group of Phantoms, destroying them. The group of ships all turned to Starboard ready to face the last Dreadnought when three Fast Frigates appeared. They zipped through the formation, destroying four Corvettes before flying away and concentrating on a Battlecruiser attacking the Fortress-class. Dozens more Picket cruisers exited Slipspace, along with even more Harrier-class escort, and a Gargantua-class transport.

* * *

><p>Dozens of Picket cruisers and Fast frigates were zooming into the Covenant fleet. Corvettes tried to slow them down, but to little effect. Battlecruiser, light destroyers, and Assault Carriers engaged them. The Shadow of Intent was badly damaged, escorted by an SDV-class Heavy Corvette, the _Ardent Prayer_. The two descended slowly to the surface of the Halo ring. They were attacked by squadrons of Despair fighters when they moved in, but Seraphs managed to hold them off. The Assault Carrier loomed over the landscape, when they picked up a distress beacon from Thel 'Vadamee.

* * *

><p>There were dozens of Gazebos and tents set up, all surrounded by an Energy barrier that was at least twenty feet tall. The space they occupied was four square kilometers. Hundreds of Ghosts, Revenants, and Spectres. Dozens of Shadows parked in the middle along with three T-47 Ultra Heavy Assault Platforms. One of the Older V1s and two of the newer V2s. The V2s were considerably smaller, but nonetheless a menacing sight. Shepard entered a Gazebo, one of the largest in the center, and found a table projecting a holographic image of the base camp and of an Elite in what looked like regular clothing. EDI, Joker, Thel, and several Elite Majors stood around the table listening to EDI and the Hologram speak. "With the limited amount of soldiers, the best advisable course of action would be to hunker down and hold out until air support can arrive." The Hologram highlighted several points that would need extra defense.<p>

"Or we could draw the native constructs of this world into a fight with this infection, they appear to consider the, Flood, as a higher threat than us." EDI pointed at several choke points. "We could use scout crafts to lure both the drones and the Flood in here, let them fight it out, then bombard it with mortars to finish off the survivors."

The Elites turned to look at Shepard. His N7 armor was covered in dust, and he carried a dented Plasma Repeater. Miranda followed him in, her Omni-tool scanning one of the Plasma pistols she was given. "Liara and Joker are in another tent, the Elites are operating on Garrus, but they're not sure if he'll survive."

Shepard sat down. He was tired, and thirsty. In just a few hours, he had gone from leading a massive expedition force. to being stranded on an Alien construct in the middle of nowhere with allies that just happened to have the same enemy as him, not to mention the enemy was near invincible. And to top it all off, they had let loose a crazy infection that consumed anything sentient in its path and turned it into a warrior, that would then fight on to consume more. He closed his eyes and dozed off.

There was an explosion. Two Elite minors ran to the edge of the Gazebo and fired up. One of them was blasted into the ground by a yellow beam of energy. Miranda shook Shepard. "We need to go now." She was holding a Carbine in her hands. She exited the Gazebo, her gun pointed to the sky. Shepard followed behind her. There were dozens of Banshees in the sky. A group of Aggressor sentinels was also there, firing at the Banshees. But at the same time, both groups were firing at small, grotesque looking creatures in the distance. Flood. All of the Watchtowers were full of Jackal snipers firing at the Flood. Grunts were setting up Plasma mortars. The two approached another Gazebo stocked with all sorts of weapons. Thel was with Liara, Joker and Edi. Joker held a Plasma rifle in his hand, Liara a Needler, and EDI a T-50 concussion rifle. Elites were forming Grunts into ranks and Yan'me were perched on top of vehicles, tents and Gazebos. "Shepard, you've finally awoken." Thel looked rather calm. "We need the entire base on high alert. We've lost contact with a scout group, but as you can see there are flood forms about a Kilometer out."

"We can't really launch an attack, but at the same time, we can't hole up here." Shepard looked around at the measly base. "Why don't we just get a cruiser to come in and pick us up, then bombard this place from the sky?"

"That would risk whatever ship comes to our rescue bringing the infection out into space." EDI said.

The Sentinels' numbers were decreasing rapidly. It seemed as though the Flood had now learned how to use weapons, and with great effect. The last sentinel fell. Volleys of needle like projectile fell on the Base camp. Though most had taken cover, a few Yan'me and Grunts were hit, and the Lekgolo shrugged the needles off as the bounced harmlessly off their armor, and began smashing the infected soldiers. Plasma mortars fired. The sound was deafening. Thousands of Flood were literally flooding down the mountain side towards the Base camp. The Plasma Mortars caused only small gaps in the Flood ranks, which were quickly filled in by pure forms. They neared the Base camp, five hundred meters. Just then, the Thrumm of a Repulsor engine filled the Valley, and the Shadow of a large Bulbous ship accompanied by a smaller, sleek looking craft covered the area. The ground was bombarded by Plasma and lasers. Banshees crashed to the floor as Flood shot them down, but the two Covenant ships were ripping through the Flood. In about fifteen minutes, nothing was left but scorched ground and dead bodies. The Assault Carrier _Shadow of Intent_ was above the camp. It was badly damaged though. The other ship was more than 4,000 meters smaller, but it was still huge.

"We should leave now. I can get a Supercarrier down here to pick us all up and we can leave this place." Rtas was on the bridge of the Assault carrier.

"And leave the infection to thrive?" Thel asked. "No, we must eradicate it."

"Ground combat is not the way, we should use the Slipspace drive of the Intent to slam into a section of the ring."

"What would that do?" Joker asked.

"If we could knock a piece of the ring in the right direction, it

could crash into another piece of the ring, then causing the ring to collapse." EDI said.

"We should do it." Shepard said. "Fighting these things on foot is a Death warrant and we don't have enough firepower to kill everything on this installation and not be blasted to bits by the Forerunners in the process."

"What about the Flood?" Liara asked. "We should take a small specimen, for research purposes. Maybe I can find a cure for it with a little time."

"No." Thel and Rtas said simultaneously. Thel continued. "If the legends are true, then taking even a single spore would be a grave mistake."

"You saw how they learned to fire weapons," Miranda chimed in. "If we're going to do something, we better do it quick before they learn to fly."

There was a loud explosion followed by the sputtering of an impulse drive before a crash and another explosion. The sound of Banshees overhead was heard briefly, but was overtaken by that of Plasma fire and more impulse drives.

* * *

><p>The battle had taken place without the knowledge of the Sangheili council. A battlegroup of Turian cruisers, along with a Quarian dreadnought engaged an unsuspecting Forerunner Dreadnought. It was a short battle. Most of the Battlegroup was decimated, but two Cruisers narrowly escaped. Within a few hours of that, a Covenant patrol fleet made up of several Corvettes, several CRS cruisers, and a CCS Battlecruiser approached the Gas Giant Veltman, where they were refused refueling and were even threatened with violence. The Council Members were arguing back and forth about what they should do upon hearing news of the Forerunner attack on Mars, and the Covenant movement to the Iota Horologii system.<p>

"We should send the new ships the Covenant prepared for us to Mars," David Anderson said. "It's not like we can turn around the first Battlegroup they prepared, now."

"They moved OUR ships without our consent!" Irissa yelled. "We should attack them now. They can't be trusted."

Esheel shifted in her seat. "I agree with Irissa to an extent, though, we do not need another enemy."

Quentius said nothing for a while then spoke up. "Perhaps we should amass our fleets and have small distractions so that the Covenant can take out the real targets."

"And what would these targets be?" asked Irissa.

"We could go after their planets, small patrol fleets, refueling stations." David said.

"We'd need to know where these targets are first. All of our reconaissance vessels have been destroyed." said Esheel. "This

campaign bears no fruit. If the tide of this war doesn't turn soon, then the Salarians will pull out."

"It's hardly been two days and you've already come to the conclusion that we can't win?" David looked somewhat angry.

"Around 200 of your ships were decimated by just fifty of those Forerunner ships." Irissa said. "I agree with Esheel, if these new technologies the Covenant gave us can't give us an upper-hand in future battles, then we will also have to pull out of the war."

David turned to Quentius. Quentius looked as if he was mulling over something, then he spoke. "The Turians can only stand by humanity for so long. This war was because of your mistakes. It would be a shame if Humanity were to fall as a consequence of this war, but I have no wish to see my civilization fall along side it when we have no qualms whatsoever with your enemy.

Ripa yelled out of anger. He had put a massive fleet at the Citadel to protect, and he was the fleetmaster. He had just received a transmission from scouts around 12 AU away of a Forerunner Expeditionary fleet heading in a direction towards the Citadel. Right after that, all communications with the scouts was lost. After going through all the information he could find on Citadel and Covenant deployments and missions in the last forty-eight hours, his face became visibly irate. A minor approached him and kneeled asking what course of action they should take, only to be slapped out of the way by Ripa's heavy hand. He turned to the navigations officer. "Dock us with the Citadel, prepare a team of Honor guards and Stealth soldiers."

The Corvette wasn't anything menacing. Not even a kilometer long. But it had some of the best technology around. It was a gift from the San 'Shyuum, and it incorporated everything from every known civilization. From Forerunner to Kig-Yar. It was possibly the most advanced Ship ever, and was certainly faster than anything else. It docked in with the Citadel. Ripa 'Moramee exited, flanked by four Honor Guards on both side, each Honor Guard stood just over 275 centimeters. Ripa was clearly angry, his combat suit made loud thuds with each step. The Honor Guards followed him, and the Stealth squads lurked in the shadows behind them. He knew clearly what he was going to do, he was going to force the council at gunpoint to adhere to his orders and strategy, or he'd recall his fleet and let the Forerunners turn this Space Station to dust particles. The doors to the Council Chamber were locked. It only took a few seconds for the Honor guards to blow them down. Several Turian, Human, Asari, and Salarian guards all turned to face the doorway. The Honor Guards marched in, and through the use of their cloaks, the Stealth team snuck in. Ripa held a Needler in one hand, and had his Energy sword in it's holster. He pointed the Needler at David Anderson. "We save your fleet from imminent destruction, and offer you aid against an enemy you have no chance of defeating on your own, and you repay us by refusing to refuel my fleets, causing ships to be stranded in deep space, then you launch an attack without my knowledge and you lead the enemy back to this very place we're trying to protect!" Two of the Human soldiers approached Ripa and attempted to Subdue him, but he shrugged them off like mosquitoes. "If you want any of your races to survive, you will all listen to my orders. You four have proven unfit to effectively lead an army against a superior enemy." When he finished

the sentence, his Comms flared with the sound of frantic bellowing, ship alarms going off, and requests for aid.

The signal cleared and one of the Elite's voices were heard clearly. "They're here."

13. Chapter 13

It had all happened too fast for Shepard to register the beginning of it. It looked to be Two Forerunner War Sphinxes approaching, with Human and Forerunner soldiers running between them. But as they got closer, it was clear that these soldiers were deformed, some had antennae sticking out of their heads, others had arms that were converted into large pincers. A Dozen Despair fighters appeared over the horizon, quickly dispatching the two Seraph scouts flying overhead. Dozens of Banshees took off to meet the Despairs, but they were no match. The Despairs broke formation and flew at the Corvette. Plasma fire lit up the sky. The Corvette could only manage to hit a few of the fighters, they were flying like aces, even for Forerunner standards. The dorsal hanger bay of the Corvette exploded, and two of the Despairs crashed into it, the rest, about seven, broke off to attack the base. Hardlight fire rained down on the base camp. Grunts and Kig-yar out in the open were slaughtered. Elites fired back with Fuel Rod cannons, to little effect. Three vampires, each flanked by two Seraphs pursued the Despairs. The Vampires were extremely effective, the low-level stasis drain quickly drained the power from the Despairs, and the Seraphs finished them off. There were only four despairs left when Plasma fire ripped through the Seraphs. The vampires broke off, two of them spiraled out of control, slamming into ammo caches in the base, causing a massive explosion. The Corvette had turned on them. Shepard saw no reasoning behind this, and turned to everyone else, no one, not even EDI could give an answer as to why the Corvette would fire on its allies. Then it dawned on him. "If the flood can assimilate sentient life into it, and as we've recently learned, they can learn how to operate our weaponry, then could they..."

"Hi-jack a Covenant Corvette?" EDI interrupted him. "The odds of them doing so are very high, though, I doubt they'd use it for ground engagements though, the force they've accumulated on the ground is more than sufficient to overrun us. They'll likely use it to engage other ships in space, possibly spread throughout an entire fleet."

As EDI's words stopped, the Corvette opened fire on the already weakened Shadow of Intent. The Assault Carrier struggled to return fire, as almost all of its power was concentrating on holding the ship together and keeping it up. Only a few Pulse Lasers could barely keep flood spores from reaching the Intent. Lasers pounded the base. Tents erupted into flames and flood forms leaped over the energy barrier. Grunts and Jackals began piling into the Shadows, and Elites scrambled to the other vehicles. A War Sphinxes slammed into the base. Wraith mortars pounded it with little effect more than scratching its paint. The War Sphinx fired its cannons at a Column of Wraiths, destroying them all. The Sphinx turned to face a Locust. The Locusts' beams went into overdrive, and their shields quickly drained. The War Sphinx shrugged off the attacks and its tail slammed into a Locust, crippling it. Three beams of blinding energy slammed into the war Sphinx from above, and was followed by superhot plasma

fire. One of the V2 Scarabs fired it's main gun at the War Sphinx, which, after a few seconds, blew up. Flood forms stormed through the base. Grunts were running back and forth, and Jackals were trying to find vantage points. Two Elites zipped by in a Revenant. Shepard readied his Plasma Repeater. Miranda, Liara, Joker, and EDI followed. Joker was using a Type-52 Carbine, Liara and Miranda were both using Plasma rifles, and EDI has a Concussion rifle. Three Elites were standing behind an overturned Spectre. Needles exploded on the armor plating of the Spectre as Flood forms advanced. A flood infected human jumped over the Spectre, and readied his Hardlight rifle, only to have an energy sword slice through his torso. The Arbiter stabbed them Flood again, and then pulled out a Plasma rifle, and fired several times at the Flood form. He turned around just it time to slash at a Stalker form which had leaped at him. The two Elites got up and fired their Storm Rifles to suppress the Flood. Shepard and Miranda entered the medical tent, keeping an eye on their corners. Liara and Joker ran to Garrus. They began to help him onto a stretcher, which the Elites had put together from scratch, when an Elite Minor entered. He put his plasma repeater on his back and pulled out a plasma pistol. He grabbed up Garrus in one arm and slung him over his shoulder as if he weighed nothing. "The Shadows are preparing to leave, we must get your friend on board one now. Cover me."

They exited the tent as a squad, EDI covered the rear, firing occasionally at Flood forms. Liara and Miranda has the sides, Joker and Shepard took point. When they finally reached the Shadows, the Elite lay Garrus down in the cabin, and he was dragged in by three Grunts that propped him up on a weapon cache. The Elite jumped in, and helped Liara in. Right as EDI was getting in, a Flood Stalker form jumped onto Miranda's back. Shepard immediately fired at it, four plasma bolts struck the Stalker's face with extreme accuracy. It screeched and fell to the floor. Joker fired two shots, and a Projectile form fell from on top of a tent. The Shadow began driving off as the Cabin doors closed. A Tank slapped Miranda to the side. Joker fired a few shots at the Tank form, one of which hit it in the face. The Tank form flinched, but then continued charging at Joker. Before it could hit him, it was tackled to the side. A Zealot punched the Tank form in the face, then his energy dagger built into his forearms stabbed the tank form in the face, killing it. Shepard ran over to Miranda, who was in a lot of pain. "Are you okay?"

"I'll live," She struggled to her feet. "It could've been a lot worse." She picked up her gun and fired at several infection forms on the ground.

Thel was running back with three Majors behind him. He pointed behind Shepard. "Get into the Scarab!"

A V2 Scarab had lowered itself to allow Shepard and the others in. Joker jumped in, and reached down to help Miranda in. Shepard jumped into the Scarab also, shortly followed by the Zealot, Arbiter, and the other Elites.

* * *

><p>Guilty Spark zipped through several corridors. Only two Aggressor sentinels remained to escort him. The others had been either destroyed, or rerouted to fight the Flood. The door to the Control room opened. He moved in quickly, but was quickly grabbed by a large

tentacle. The Sentinels began to fire, and two flood combat forms fell, but four more destroyed the Sentinels. The tentacle moved Guilty Spark in front of a large, ugly looking creature. Webs of Flood Biomass stretched all across the Control room, and this creature stood right on the panel where one was to activate the Halo ring. It was huge, and the web of Biomass seemed to be originating from it, or leading into it. Guilty Spark spun about in the tentacle. "Release me!"<p>

The tentacle threw him to the floor. A combat form picked him up. He blasted the thing that resembled a human with his laser. The tentacle then smacked Guilty Spark into a wall, and picked him up again. "We have already taken this ringworld Monitor. The Flood will rise again, but first, I need to know what you know."

Guilty Spark looked closely at the thing. He could see the helmets of Human soldiers and cadets in it, even limbs sticking out, but he couldn't seem to find anything that resembled the Commander in charge of the Human contingent on the Installation. "My purpose is to activate this ring in the event of a Flood outbreak within 25,000 light-years of the installation, and that is what I intend to do."

* * *

><p>The interior of the Corvette was now covered in flood hives, nests, and growth pods. Combat forms patrolled around the ship. At the bridge, the shipmaster, and his crew, were assimilated into a Proto-gravemind. The Corvette sped into the battle raging between the Covenant and Forerunners. It left behind an army of millions of Combat forms and pure forms, making sure there wasn't a bit of sentient life left on the Installation. For all the Proto-gravemind new, the Forerunners and Covenant were unaware that the Flood had escaped, but it wouldn't be so for long. The Corvette entered a battlegroup of Battlecruisers and SDV Corvettes. All the ships were too preoccupied with fighting the Forerunners to scan the Ardent Prayer, they were just happy to see another Covenant ship with a Veteran commander at the helm. The group was still in firing range of the Forerunner fleet, which was quite small, this baffled the Proto-gravemind, but it didn't bother him too much, he was happy, it made things easier. The Forerunners payed little attention to the relatively small battlegroup, as they were concerned with the bulk of the Covenant ships. As the Battlegroup approached a lone Picket cruiser, the Ardent Prayer jettisoned hundreds of Carrier forms. It also fired off flood Dispersal pods at the Picket Cruiser, at the same time, the rest of the Battlegroup opened up with light Plasma and laser fire. The _Ardent Prayer_ fired on ships closest to her, bringing their shields down. The rest of the Battlegroup scattered in disarray, wondering why the Corvette had fired on them. The ships that were hit, were spammed by Carrier forms. The Dispersal pods the Ardent Prayer launched were masked by the Plasma and Laser fire of the fleet, and managed to hit the Picket cruiser, though several were destroyed because they impacted before the shields of the ship had gone down. The _Ardent Prayer_ then turned to the rest of the Battlegroup, all Battlecruisers. It launched a Plasma Torpedo at one of the Cruisers, then turned to another and opened fire with all of its plasma guns. The Battlecruisers took evasive actions, though the first one was hit, and its shields went down. Dozens of Dispersal pods, and hundreds of Carrier forms were launched at it. The Dispersal pods were destroyed by the Plasma turrets on the Battlecruisers, but a few of the Carriers got close enough. Two

Picket cruisers were now approaching the Battlegroup, which was fighting amongst itself. Three off the infected Corvettes, and a normal Battlecruiser fired at the first Picket cruiser. From behind, the infected Picket cruiser fired on the other Picket cruiser. The plan had gone well. The attack took them by surprise, neither the Covenant nor the Forerunner had any idea what was going on. Now, there were ten Battlecruisers, twenty-four SDV-class Corvettes, and a Picket cruiser all under flood control. Each with their own Proto-Gravemind. They turned to face the Covenant main fleet, when Slipspace ruptures opened up. Over twenty. Ships unlike any the flood had encountered before exited. Most were barely as big as a Corvette, and the largest were almost as big as a battlecruiser. Then one massive one came. It was twice as large as a Covenant Super-carrier. As soon as the ship exited Slipspace, a slug of Titanium, encased in Hardlight, and then another layer of super heated plasma flew at a Forerunner Dreadnought. It was far too fast for any ship that any known civilization had to dodge. The slug went right through the Dreadnought's shields and tore a hole right through it. Small Battlegroups of Covenant Frigates and Corvettes were breaking off to surround the Forerunners. The Ardent Prayer zeroed in on one small group. Just a few CRS cruisers and an SDV Frigate.

* * *

><p>The Gargantua-class transport was only faced by several CRS cruisers when it went to land on Mars. The Harrier escort followed closely behind it, dispatching of any ships that made the mistake of getting too close. Three Corvettes came in from the rear to attack the Harrier Escort, but two Picket Cruisers destroyed the three Corvettes. A CCS Battlecruiser then engaged one of the Picket Cruiser, and a Heavy Destroyer accompanied by four CRS Cruisers engaged the other Picket Cruiser. The Gargantua-class transport entered low-orbit, at which point the Harrier-class Escort broke off to reengage with Covenant forces, smashing right through a Corvette that was in its way. The Unflinching resolve moved to engage a Fast frigate, along with five other Covenant frigates and a DAV-class Light Corvette. A Forerunner Cruiser turned to engage the Supercarriers. Jul studied the battle carefully, realizing that his fleet was losing. "All ships-of-the-line, concentrate fire on Forerunner cruiser at coordinates thirty, four, nineteen." Dozens of Battlecruisers and Destroyers, along with the Supercarriers, Assault carriers, and the Superdestroyer all turned to fire on the Forerunner Cruiser. As they were firing, another Cruiser came up from behind and destroyed four Battlecruisers. The Destroyers broke off to engage the new Cruiser, along with a few Corvettes.<p>

The Gargantua ship was already landing. Two Seekers had cleared the land below of any and all opposing forces. The Gargantua class didn't carry that many soldiers, only a thousand soldiers. Though, their leader was The Falchion. When the ship landed, the Promethean Warrior-Servants marched out with extreme discipline. They had no vehicles or air support, but they would make do. After all, how bad could a few primitives that barely use weapons in the Kiloton range on their ships be? This was like a day off for him, and it was a sort of blow to his self-esteem that the Didact would assign him to this mission. But no matter, he'd get it done. They had landed just outside Lowell city, and he could already see Thousands of the enemy soldiers moving to his army. They very closely resembled the Humans he had always known, sometimes as bitter times, but as of recently, estranged friends.

Artillery pounded on their position. Dust was kicked up everywhere. Sniper fire came from all directions. Falchion was somewhat amused. "They might as well start throwing rocks too." He signaled and the Prometheans moved out.

The Prometheans were advancing through the fire. Hundreds of M35 Makos and M-44 Hammerheads sped down towards them. A Thanix missile connected with a Warrior-servant, actually knocking her to the floor. She quickly recovered though, and fired an Incineration cannon at the M29 Grizzly that had hit her. The Grizzly exploded in a huge fireball, and the troops around her were disintegrated. An A-461 Mantis flew down, followed by several others in an attack formation. They grazed the ground with their fire, though the bullets barely phased the Warrior-servants. Streaks of hardlight arced across the martian surface, each one dropping an Alliance soldier. A Hammerhead fired into the ranks of Prometheans, but had little effect. An Incineration cannon hit it, blowing it up, and damaging a Grizzly next to it. Six Grizzlies were lined up, each of them launched two Thanix missiles at the Prometheans. They actually managed to kill three Warrior-servants. Upon seeing those soldiers die, Falchion was enraged. He ran to the front of the Prometheans, followed overhead by four Watchers. He jumped into the air, and drew his Light rifle. He scoped, and fired four shots in rapid succession, each shot killing two Alliance soldiers. Laser and Ballistic fire ripped through the air at him. Hardlight shields popped up right before each and every bullet and bolt, protecting Falchion from damage. An Mantis flew from behind, firing at him, but destroying two Watchers. A Thanix missile collided with him. The Watcher protected him with a Hardlight shield, but the explosion destroyed the Watcher. He tossed two grenades in the air, and with perfect timing, four A-61's flew above, and were destroyed by the explosions. Falchion and the Warrior-servants had overrun the Alliance positions. All the Alliance soldiers fled to the city, none stayed behind to fight.

They were setting up now, preparing for a final push into the city, it was simple enough, go in kill anyone that fought back, and have minimal collateral damage. An EMP wave blasted over the city, just a Kilometer away. Out of a portal, a huge ship, though not by Foreunner standards, about a kilometer long appeared. Falchion didn't recognize the ship as that of any known civilization, or even the System Alliance. It was something different. The ship's bow tilted slightly towards the ground, and Falchion could feel the thrum of a Repulsor engine, which was odd. Only the Sangheili and San 'Shyuum used those, and this ship belonged to neither faction. The bow was aimed at him and his troops. There was a flash, and a metal object was hurled out of the ship at impressive speeds. When it hit the ground, it released energy equivalent to a little over 60 kilotons of TNT. Within two seconds, it fired another slug, two seconds later, another, and it did so for an entire minute.

* * *

><p>The Scarabs were marching away from the scene of destruction. Ghosts, Revenants, Spectres, Shadows, and Wraiths followed. Locusts covered the rear. Overhead, Phantoms and Liches flew. A glassing beam light up behind them, and the skies darkened. Inside the Scarab, Joker, Miranda, and Shepard were shaken, but the rest of the crew were unphased, as they were used to close proximities to glassing beams. Shepard sat at the back of the Scarab, his feet dangled over

the edge. He examined the Plasma Repeater he held in his hand. It was a lot more powerful than any small arm the Alliance, or any of the Citadel forces used. As he looked back, he could see the intense light from the glassing beam, and the air was even hotter. He could tell already that the beam was far more powerful than anything the Citadel, or even the Reapers had. And then to think he was fighting an enemy even stronger than that. An enemy that shrugged off Giga and Megaton blasts and returned fire with Teratons, then there he was, thinking himself lucky if the Normandy could produce a Decaton, or if he's lucky, a few double digit kilotons. Miranda sat next him, but Joker was fascinated with how the armored vehicle worked, listening intently as the Arbiter explained. "I know this seems pretty stupid to ask," She sat down. "But what's wrong?"<p>

He looked over, no sign of a smile. "Ever even consider how we plan on beating the Forerunners?"

"I thought we might, you know, kill them." She rubbed her rib cage, which hurt badly since that tank form slammed her aside.

"These guys put forth more energy with one ship than an entire Turian fleet could. I remember, looking through the schematics for the Sovereign, she could let out over seven Megatons every minute. These guys would shrug that off and then ram her with a Frigate." He got up, and then helped Miranda to her feet.

"I see what you mean, but come on, we beat the Reapers, didn't we?" She grabbed his hand and pulled herself up.

"Yeah, and now he have that thing we had to fight back there. I'd rather go back to an endless war with the Reapers than command an army of Spectres against these things for a few days." He slung the repeater over his shoulder, and it locked into place on his back. "No use sulking over our problems."

Miranda nodded. "Let's go see if we can be of any aid."

* * *

><p>The Shadow was rattled from all the explosions. She barely had enough energy to keep the Energy Projector firing. Rtas considered making the jump now, while the ships still could. He was dissuaded by the fact that it would kill Thel and the hundreds of Covenant with him. He knew that their deaths would be worth it, if the legends of the Flood were true, but he couldn't bring himself to end the lives of warriors he had fought alongside with for decades. "Officer." He called to one of the younger Elites. "Notify the fleet that the Flood has broken out. Send down two Battlecruisers to retrieve troops deployed on the ringworld. They have an hour before we jump our ship into the side of this ring to destroy it."

The Elite nodded and returned to his console to send the message. An Honor guard burst into the bridge. "Sir, breach in the Hanger bay. The Flood have entered."

Rtas looked grimly at his console, which showed holographic projections of Flood forms and the _Shadow of Intent_ above them, firing its energy projector. "Lock off the hanger bay, set plasma charges on all entrances to it, get all experimental bioweapons ready to be injected into the air in the Hanger bay, and have whatever crew

is left on this ship at full alert."

* * *

><p>Ripa was going over all the information on the Datapad handed to him. Reports were coming in from all area under Covenant controlled areas. High Charity was under attack, as was Te and Decided Heart. The Forerunner fleet here was small. A Fortress class ship, Twenty Picket cruisers, and a two Dreadnoughts. The trouble was that there weren't that many Covenant ships at the Citadel. Just Turian, Asari, and Human ships. One of the Picket Cruisers took the lead. Four Turian cruisers moved to intercept the Picket cruiser. Hardlight fire opened up, tearing through one of the Cruisers, the Kinetic barriers and Ablative armor was relatively useless. The other cruisers fired their mass accelerators. The Picket cruiser shrugged off a few hits, and fired back with its Particle cannon. The Particle cannon immediately took down the Kinetic barriers on the cruiser. The Picket cruiser closed in with the cruiser, and the other two closed in on the Picket cruiser. The Turian ships fired GARDIAN lasers and Thanix guns. The Picket cruiser moved in close and used its Heavy Point defense guns to rip right through the Ablative armor on the Turian ships. Three Slugs from mass accelerators on Human cruisers hit the Picket cruiser. The cruiser turned to face the new enemy, when it was hit by a Plasma Torpedo. Three Covenant Corvettes opened up with Plasma fire, while the Alliance cruisers continued with their mass accelerator cannons. Two more Picket cruisers came up, Particle cannons destroying one of the Alliance cruisers. An Asari Dreadnought fired its main gun. The Slug punctured the lead Picket Cruiser, but it was still intact. Another Plasma torpedo from a Covenant Corvette took it down. Eight more Corvettes formed in a Diamond formation. Hundreds of Turian and Human Frigates and Cruisers flew around in flotillas. Three Asari Dreadnoughts, each a little over Two Kilometers long took position and fired their mass accelerators at the incoming Picket Cruisers, as did the Frigates and Cruisers. The Corvettes fired plasma torpedoes, while five Battlecruisers fired their energy projectors.<p>

Ripa turned to face the council. "Your brash actions are the cause of this."

14. Chapter 14

A dozen new blips popped up on Jul's radar. None of them Covenant or Forerunner vectors. "Sir, thirteen more ships just entered the battle!" An Elite yelled.

"I only see twelve," Jul looked at his console. "Where's the last one?"

"In atmosphere."

Jul looked at the console for a second, then remembering the events of the Forerunner attack on Erda, his eyes widened. "They came in through slipspace portals, these Citadel forces never knew bout Slipspace before."

"Preliminary scans over, these ships have blends of all sorts of technology." The Elite said.

Jul's ship rocked as a Picket cruise came close, only to be destroyed by three pursuing Battlecruisers. "Hard to Starboard, heat the lateral lines, let's see if a few Teratons won't scare that Harrier escort away." The Harrier escort was exiting the atmosphere of Mars. Particle cannon fire lit up the Corvettes trailing it, turning them into super heated husks of metal. Three Energy Projectors fired at the Harrier-class. It moved out of the path of the first two, but was hit by the third. Four Heavy Destroyers also came in to fire their energy projectors. The Harrier-class fired back with everything. Particle cannons connected with ships that got too close, while its main guns pounded the Destroyers. Two of the Destroyers exploded. There were explosions as the Citadel ships opened fire on the Harrier escort.

"Harrier escort's shields are dropping fast sir, sustained fire should br-" The Elite was cut off by an explosion. The Supercarrier rocked. Hundreds of Foreunner Picket cruisers and dozens of Dreadnoughts dropped out of Slipspace. The Covenant fleet disengaged and pulled back, the slower ships being decimated by the Forerunner fleet. The Harrier escort shot out of range of the Supercarrier. "One of our Energy Projectors have been taken out." the Elite said. He went over some more data. "The Forerunner fleet is now far larger than what we have. We cannot win this battle, sir."

Jul's face was sullen. "Full retreat. Have all ships scatter to random, friendly system, but make sure that no one goes to High Charity or the Citadel."

The Elite nodded, and turned back to the controls. Jul watched as the Supercarrier's bow turned away from the Dozens of Battlecruisers being turned to scrap metal. His heart became heavy at the thought of all his brothers dying for, what? A measly alliance of races barely stronger than the Kig-Yar pirates?

* * *

><p>"Didact, around fifty new ships just entered the system." The warrior-servant yelled from his console.<p>

"Classification." UrDidact said calmly.

"Unknown sir, but the technology they're using matches that of the System Alliance ships we fought at Erde-Tyrene."

Didact looked as one of the Picket Cruisers turned to scrap as one of the Mass Accelerators pounded it. "Impossible. At Erda their largest ships could barely handle our Picket Cruisers, now they're having slugging matches with our ships, and WINNING."

_ All_ sorts of Data for the ships came up on a holographic screen in front of the Didact. The ship was massive, about sixty kilometers long. That was bigger than the older model Fortress-class ships. It's main gun fired, and a Dreadnought burst into short-lived flames. The Didact looked over the scans of the ship carefully. A lot of work went into this ship. It was clearly a blend of the most advanced Human, San 'Shyuum, and Forerunner tech, all on a Citadel platform. He looked back at the scans. "Human and Forerunner technology? Impossible." He always had his suspicions that the San 'Shyuum were helping the Covenant, so it wouldn't be a surprise to him that their tech was there, but he desperately wanted to know where the Citadel

got a hold of Human technology and Forerunner technology. Several blips popped up on the scanners.

"Small covenant Battlegroup, approaching from the rear of the fleet." The warrior-servant said.

"Move fifteen Picket Cruisers to intercept them." Didact said. He didn't think the Covenant to be the biggest threat now. After going over who was the biggest threat, it hit him. He had forgotten all about it in his endeavour to pummel the Covenant into the ground. The Flood had escaped. "Analyze the approach vector the ships are coming from!" He yelled.

"It looks like they're coming from the direction of Installation 4."

"Have all ships open fire on those Covenant ships, let none survive!" Didact yelled furiously. The Forerunner fleet turned its attention towards the small Battlegroup of ships, then the Didact saw something unexpected, a Picket Cruiser was among their ranks. The Battlegroup was systematically picking out at the initial Picket Cruisers Didact sent to intercept them. A slug then collided with one of the Picket Cruisers, destroying it. Ten of the Citadel cruisers had flown into the ranks of the Forerunner fleet. Dreadnoughts fired at them, but met unexpected resistance from the shields. Covenant Battlecruisers also moved in quickly. The Forerunner fleet was now in disarray. Didact faced the decision of allowing his fleet to be defeated by the enemy, or allowing the Flood to assimilate yet more ships, and perhaps even escape the system. "Split the fleet," He said. "Half the fleet remain engaged with the Flood infestation, the other half go back to fighting the Covenant." It was too late though. The Flood ships had already taken over the Picket cruisers that weren't destroyed. The Mantle's Approach, now at the head of the battlegroup assigned to exterminate the Flood, took fire. While it could more than handle the fire from the Covenant ships, the Picket Cruisers were pounding away at it. A group of three Citadel ships were firing their main guns, preventing any other Foreunner ships to draw fire from the Flood. The Mantle's Approach fired several Particle cannons into the Flood Battlegroup. Two of the Corvettes were destroyed. A Heavy Destroyer fired its energy projector, which the Mantle shrugged off.

More Particle cannon blasts slammed into the Mantle's Approach, upon which she returned fire. "Do they not understand the seriousness of the Flood threat?" The Didact said, partially to his self, as he saw the Citadel ships continue firing on the Forerunner fleet. "Run through all possible communications systems, they must still think that Battlegroup is Covenant. We must notify the Citadel fleet that this is not the case."

"With all due respect sir," A Promethean said. "I don't think they'll be too eager to attack their ally's ships on orders from you."

"Which is why I will let my wife be the diplomat here." Didact said.

**I won't be rolling out new chapters as often as I used to because of things going on, also, I may be starting a new, more sensible story, as I'm sure all of you understand this one makes no sense

considering the Mass Effect universe was even given a chance. But I will try and finish this story though, so, Yeah :-D**

End
file.